LET GO!

Theory and Practice of Detachment according to Zen

By HUBERT BENOIT

TRANSLATED BY ALBERT W. LOW

London
GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD
RUSKIN HOUSE MUSEUM STREET

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1962

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH
'LACHER PRISE'

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
in 11 point Juliana type
BY THE BLACKFRIARS PRESS LTD
LEICESTER

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I should like to acknowledge the help given to me in the translation of this book by Mr T. S. Curteis who gave valuable advice on the style, my wife Jean who did the typing, and to Len and Yvonne who also helped.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

This book represents a culmination of thoughts which made up *The Supreme Doctrine*.[1] In spite of their theoretical form, these studies have a practical aim; the aim of all theory, when it concerns human realization, is essentially practical.

The Supreme Doctrine, however, did not reach a solution to the question of an effective technique for 'letting-go'. I did not know then if such a technique were possible or if intuitive understanding would be sufficient.

Since then I have come to the conclusion that a special 'exercise' must intervene in order to actualize our understanding. The third part of this present work is entirely devoted to this exercise, to the analysis of language—an analysis on which this exercise is based—and to the necessary conditions for it to be effective.

The first two parts constitute a long preamble, but it is very necessary that they should be read in order to understand the end of the book. The ideas of the Zen about realization are so disturbing to our usual opinions that I felt I had to gather together as many viewpoints as possible to support these ideas.

[1] *The Supreme Doctrine*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1955

CONTENTS

PART ONE

1. *Preparation for Sudden Illumination* page 15
2. *Outer and Inner Perception—Sensing and Feeling* 32
3. *'Experiencing'* 40
4. *The Will to Experience: Its Contradictory Nature* 49
5. *The Birth of Thought* 57
6. *Conscious and Impartial Thought* 75

PART TWO

7. *The Three Cosmic Planes* 93
8. *The Conflict of Human Life* 107
9. *The Idea of Perfection* 130
10. *The Inner Lacerations of Man* 142
11. *The Illusory 'Enigma' of Death* 154
12. *The Aim of Intellectual Research* 164

PART THREE

13. *The Hierarchy of Psychomotive Power* 173
14. *The Complete Constitution of Man* 186
15. *The Structure of the World of Speech* 196
16. *Two Mental Automatisms* 206
17. *'The Word'* 214
18. *The Association of Ideas* 221
19. *The Expression of Thought* 229
20. *The Hypnotic Nature of Our Ordinary Attention* 234
21. *Non-Convergent Language* 241
22. *Non-Convergent Language (continued)* 248
23. *Spiritual Methods* 255
24. *The Approach of Satori* 261
25. *The Conditions Required for Inner Counter-Work to be Effective* 267

PART ONE

CHAPTER 1

PREPARATION FOR SUDDEN ILLUMINATION

In our normal state of development, we are forced to live our lives in a way which leads to an unhappy impasse. This is because of the way we regard our relation to the outside world. For lack of sufficient understanding, the view we have of our situation creates an insoluble 'problem' for us. It is not a particular way of living that constitutes the impasse, but the ignorance in which all possible ways of living are carried on. Therefore it is Utopian to seek a manner of living which might be a solution. In the situation in which we see ourselves we can neither advance nor retreat.

However, a Chinese proverb says, 'Where there is an impasse there is a way out'; because the impasse itself is the way out; because the complete realization of the impasse destroys its false appearance. As long as the 'problem' is posed, it is insoluble. There is a solution, but this is not the solution to the 'problem'; it is the perception that in reality there never was a problem.

I am, therefore, interested in giving up the search for new ways of 'liberation' and in deepening my understanding. I want to try to see the impasse in order to see that it does not exist.

Using all the ideas which have been awakened in my mind by metaphysical teachings, I want to come back to the famous 'problem' of my situation in face of the outside world, no longer this time in order to resolve it, but to reconsider it entirely.

As soon as I conjure up my situation in face of the outside world, ideas of perception and attention offer themselves for my examination. Since my present view of this situation is defective, my perception of the world, and my attention to the world, are also defective. How can I conceive the perfect perception, the attention without error, which would permit me 'in an instant to erase completely the cave of phantoms'? But, first of all, of what do perception and attention in general consist?

I consciously perceive an object; I am attentive to it. In reality I do not perceive the object as it is in itself, in its totality as a manifestation of the Absolute. I perceive a mental representation which is built up in me in response to the contact of this outer object as it excites my sense organs. What I perceive is not, however, unconnected with the reality of the outer object. My mental representation is based upon certain aspects of this reality, which means that it is partially adequate to the outer object. Furthermore, experience proves to me that my image of the object is of practical use and that I am not led astray by acting as if it were a true image. The agreement which exists between my perceived image of the object and the real object is comparable to the agreement existing between a certain sectional plane of a volume and the volume itself. The section is not identical with the volume, but is partially adequate to it; it gives me inadequate information on the volume, but the information it does give me is in a way true.

The partial adequacy of my mental image to the reality of the object supposes an identity of structure between the object and me. If contact with the object, through my sense-organs, awakens in my mind an adequate image, it is through a type of resonance which supposes a structural agreement between the object and me. If I produce the note 'A' near a violin, the violin string which itself gives the note 'A' will start to vibrate of its own accord by resonance. That which emanates from an object and excites my sense-organs awakens in me a complex mental vibration which is in accordance with this emanation. This vibration, of which the appearance in me is released by the object, is not *produced* by the object; it pre-existed in me. The object did no more than awaken or actualize it.

If my perception of the object supposes an identity of structure between this object and me, I do not perceive this identity. I do not, as it were, surrender totally to the phenomenon of resonance, I do not offer my centre to it. My response to the resonance, I do not offer my centre to it. My response to the emanation of the object remains superficial, partial; thus I am given only partial consciousness of the object and of myself.

It could be otherwise. If I were completely open to the emanation of the object, the phemonenon of resonance would be produced in my very centre, in that centre where the same unique Reality resides which also resides at the centre of the object. The image that would then be formed in me would be totally adequate to the object and my perception of the object would be at the same time the perception of our identity. In other words, the perception would be a trinitarian perception of the totality of the object, of the totality of myself, and of the underlying essence which makes us identical beneath our differences.

My ordinary perception is not of this kind. It lacks the underlying essence, the hypostasis, which alone would be able to realize the identity beneath the differences. For lack of this essence, the identity-in-the-difference is divided into identity and difference. The discrimination between the object and myself corresponds to all that is lacking in my partially-adequate image; the object, to the degree that its totality eludes me, is a stranger to me. The identity which is not perceived is replaced by a fusion of two poles, subject and object; in other words, by an identification. In ordinary perception I am identified with an object whose reality evades me, and moreover my own reality evades me also.

I said just now that I was able to offer my centre to the phenomenon of resonance, but that I do not do so. One can equally well say that the outer world offers to release in me a total resonance, but that I refuse it; and this refusal corresponds to my fundamental claim to-be-absolutely-in-so-far-as-distinct. According to my present illusory view, an antagonism exists between the outer world and myself because through certain of its aspects, the outer world threatens the destruction of my individual being. According to this view, the outer world is a powerful *not-self*, an irreducible antagonist. Opposed to it, I claim *it is not* and that I *am*. I claim, in being distinct, to be the Absolute, permanent, unmovable, *unconditioned*. Without doubt I am inevitably conditioned to a certain extent by the outer world, but my claim is safe as long as I withhold my centre from this conditioning. I certainly wish to enter into partial or peripheral resonance with the stimuli of the outer world, but not into total or central resonance. Besides, if I admit to being partially conditioned by the outer world, it is because I do not see the perception as a conditioning of me by the world, but as a possibility for me to condition the world. I do not consider my perceptive knowledge of the object as an identity between the

object and me. This would destroy my claim to be absolutely-in-so-far-as-distinct. I regard it as a superiority of myself over the object. When I buy a tie, I do not see that the tie chooses me just as much as I choose the tie. I only see that I choose it and thereby keep the view of myself as unconditioned. In all perception, the world knows me at the same time as I know the world, but I only want to see this perception as knowledge of the world by me. I only want to see it as a possibility for *me* to condition the *world*, as a proof of my power. The loss of a possible perception, the loss of sight for example, is felt as a negation. This demonstrates well that the enjoyment of sight was felt as an affirmation, as a means of conditioning the outside world.

There is another way in which I come to interpret my partial conditioning, in perception, as an affirmation of my distinct being. In awakening a part of me, the outer world makes me aware of myself, it gives me a certain consciousness of myself. I grasp the image that the world creates in me and, because the image is an aspect of myself, I grasp myself at the same time. In the impression that I have of what is happening in me, I eliminate the part played by the outer world. I do not see that we, the world and I, create in perfect equality; I only see myself as the creator. I only see myself as conditioning my own realization and using the outer world simply as an instrument for this conditioning.

Let us come back now to attention. Perfect attention could be defined as the act by which, in response to the offer of the outer world, I await the total and simultaneous awareness of the outer world and myself. This perfect attention would be at the same time both active and passive because it would be the acceptance of a gift offered; I would actively open myself to an action coming from outside; I would choose to open myself without choosing that to which I am open myself.

My attention, which plays a part in my present attitude of opposition to the Not-self, is necessarily imperfect. Although my periphery is open, my centre remains closed. I refuse to allow this complete interpenetration between the outer world and myself which would be perfect perceptive attention. I do not know of the central identity of the two poles, subject and object, and therefore this interpenetration seems to be a reciprocal negation: to eat or to be eaten. Thus I wish to eat the outer world without being eaten and I only open myself to the world because I consider my penetration into the outer world to be concomitant with this opening. I only allow the world to come into me in order to grasp it, just as the web captures its prey. I only identify myself with an aspect of the world in order to incorporate it in me. My present attention is not only a state of attending but also of tension; it should be compared, not with an open, still hand, ready to receive, but with a hand that thrusts out and grasps the awaited prey.

With this attitude my attention is necessarily partial. My centre alone is universal, and therefore in harmony with all aspects of the Universe; my periphery is personal, made up in a particular manner, and has a selective attitude to the outer world. Since I refuse my centre to the phenomenon of resonance, the play of my attention is controlled by personal likes and dislikes. Perfect attention would be attention to all aspects of the outer world whose emanations come to me at the same moment; on the other hand, imperfect attention only puts me in conscious relation with a single aspect of the outer world, which, though more or less complex, is still unique. This is what is commonly meant by saying that one can only pay attention to one thing at a time.

Let us now look more closely at the nature of the refusal of my centre and its closure to the outer world. The emanation which comes to me from the object, through my sense organs, releases in me the phenomenon of resonance and can be described as a current of cosmic energy which unites two poles—the object and myself. It is because of our centres that the object and I are these two poles. The cosmic current of the perception therefore necessarily touches my centre. The refusal does not consist in the fact that my centre stays outside of the circuit, but in the fact that the current is not exhausted there and that it is, on the contrary, diverted towards my periphery. The current so diverted exhausts itself in an image, a partial and peripheral aspect of my being, which thus abnormally plays the part of the pole or centre. My true centre fails to fulfil its function and this function is taken over by an eccentric part of myself. This is how my identification with an image occurs.

This method of representing what happens in me according to my ordinary attention takes care of the two aspects—the aspect of attending and the aspect of tension—that we have pointed out. The part of the circuit which unites the object and my true centre corresponds to the attending, the opening or the decontraction part; the end of the circuit, which goes from my true centre to a peripheral and false centre, corresponds to the tension, the closure or the contraction part. If there were only the first part, perception would be illumination; because the second part is added, perception becomes darkness, false interpretation, 'Maya'.

To the second part of the circuit, refracted from my true centre on to an illusory centre, is connected my feeling. All conscious perception affects me in my totality because the cosmic current which sustains this phenomenon passes by my centre instead of spending itself there. If my centre were to accept what comes to it, it would not be affected by it, because this energy is its own, since the centre of the object and my own centre are identical. When I am affected by the cosmic energy passing through me, it is not even the energy which affects me, but the disruptive dualism of my acceptance and my refusal. The disruptive dualism does not exist, as I am in the habit of believing, between the outside object and myself; it exists entirely in myself—between my true centre, which fails to assume its function, and my false peripheral centre, which incorrectly assumes this function. When I am strongly affected because of such and such an incident in my life, I feel that I am internally displaced, beside myself, and it is only after some time has elapsed that I re-establish myself in myself. This correct inner intuition corresponds to the tension we have spoken of between the true centre and the false centre. That which has 'displaced' me is therefore not the thing perceived, but my simultaneous opening and closing of myself to the emanation of the outer world.

This picture of the perceptive circuit as two segments, the one centripetal and the other centrifugal, enables us to understand better what Zen teaches. Zen tells us that we are here and now in a state of Satori, but that our restlessness prevents us from recognizing this fact. The centripetal segment of perception represents perfect perception, illumination, the perception of Satori, and we can see that this perception really does exist in us here and now. We lack nothing of what should normally happen within us, but we are unhappy because something *extra* happens, a useless complication, represented by the centrifugal segment.

Our unhappiness is not that we close *instead* of opening, refuse *instead of* accepting, but arises from the superaddition of the closure on to the opening, the refusal on to the acceptance. We do not, then, have to do something which at present we are omitting; we have to neutralize something we are doing too much.

We can go further in the study of attention. Having distinguished between perfect attention and imperfect attention, we can discover in ordinary imperfect attention a new distinction.

Imperfect attention is the act by which I attend to and grasp the appearance of a partial consciousness of the world and of myself. The image that I perceive of an object is comparable, as we have said, to a plane-section of the volume of the object. My mental image, based on this image of the object, is comparable to a plane-section of the volume of my being. The partial agreement existing between the object and myself, in perception, consists in the identity of these two sections. These two sections, of the object and of myself, coincide; and this is why we have been able to say that perception brings about an interpenetration of the outer world and myself.

This coincidence between the outer image and the inner image can be produced in two opposite ways—either the outer image conditions the appearance of the inner image or else the inner image conditions the appearance of the outer image. We have already described the first way; let us now study the second.

We must, first of all, state clearly that we are only going to concern ourselves here with attention-perception resulting in a new image, establishing a new partial bridge between the outer world and ourselves. We leave on one side the old images accumulated in our memory, those mnemonic traces which appeared earlier. When I dream, my imaginative film is composed of images which can no longer be called outer or inner; they are at the same time both and at the same time neither one nor the other. Thus I may see the contents of my memory as the

summation of all the sections realized in my volume, or as the material offered to the integration of my Reality.

Let us then study attention-perception ending in a new image in the case where the inner image conditions the outer image. We will call this attention 'creative' in opposition to the attention already considered, which was 'receptive'. In receptive attention there was, as we have said, decontracted attending and contracted tension; let us be precise now and say that the decontraction preceded and conditioned the contraction. I opened myself first of all to the outside object that I was looking at, then I grasped the image of it which was formed in my mind. With creative attention the process is more complex and starts in an inverse manner. The contraction precedes the release. Let us see how this is: I seek a solution to a problem; that is to say that I seek to get out of a confusion. What do I do? First of all I grasp all the elements that I can distinguish in the confusion which needs to be sorted out; in other words, I pose my problem, I formulate its terms. This mental operation is an effort of contraction. Afterwards I stop this effort and, as though forgetting all of a sudden and letting go of all that I had grasped, I wait in an effort of mental relaxation; if nothing comes to me I recommence my contraction, then my relaxation. Finally the solution comes to me. If I observe myself very closely I see that the solution comes to me in relaxation and that the very arrival of the solution is itself relaxation. I should be able to rest there, knowing that the solution is present without grasping it. As a rule I grasp it by formulating it in words, by a mental effort which again is an effort of contraction. We must, however, realize that the act of grasping my discovery is not the discovery itself and that the discovery, on the contrary, implies relaxation. I grasp my thoughts in words, in an effort of contraction; but before this grasping, my thought is born in the relaxation without words. Once I have formulated my discovery, when I have been able to express it orally or in writing, an outer image is there which could be for others the object for their receptive attention. This outer image has, however, appeared in the world by the phenomenon of resonance in response to an inner image that I had hidden within me. The energy in the circuit has gone from me to the outer world. Whereas with receptive attention I become conscious of myself by becoming conscious of the world, with creative attention I become conscious of the world in becoming conscious of myself.

These two modalities of my ordinary consciousness give me a certain acquaintance with myself and with the world; that is to say, that they give me an acquaintance with certain aspects of Reality. But these aspects are always particular and are represented by particular images. Furthermore, ordinary attention, which always presupposes subject and object, cannot itself ever give me total knowledge.

What other attention must intervene?

We have seen that, in my claim to-be-absolutely-in-so-far-as-distinct, I refuse to be conditioned in my centre by the outer world. I do not take account of the fact that central conditioning is nothing to be afraid of; it is nothing to be afraid of because the centre of the world which conditions and the centre of myself which is conditioned are but one at the source of Reality. My total or central conditioning could not possibly be regarded as a restriction, because the dualism on which all imaginable restraint rests would be reconciled there. The man who, at the moment of Satori, 'lets go' and lets himself be totally conditioned, perceives that the opposition Self and Not-Self has never existed and that everything in the Universe, including himself, has always been perfectly free; he feels himself free in obedience to the nature of things, because the source of this nature and of things is his own source.

In my present state I know theoretically what I have just expressed, but I do not understand it with all my being; as soon as I cease thinking metaphysically in order to come back to life, everything proceeds in me as though I had understood nothing; the opposition Self and Not-Self is there, making me see the central conditioning by the outer world as the destruction of my Being by the Being of the outer world, by the Not-Self. With all my power I resist this central conditioning; I refuse to be affected in my centre by the outer world.

My ignorance has an effect which one could call at the same time tragic and comic. Since this opening of myself to being conditioned in the centre of myself, by the outer world, would show me that I am perfectly free and not affected, my rejection

of this conditioning—which I believe would affect me to the point of annihilation—results in the fact that I *am* affected. The evasive action, by which I dodge a sword that I believe I see falling directly on my head, creates an imaginary sword of Damocles which I feel is always above me, suspended on an elastic thread; it is this that causes these fluctuations of my affectivity, ranging from terror (when the thread seems stretched) to arrogance (when the thread seems secure).

Now that we see that it is precisely our refusal to be affected which releases all our affectivity, we can correctly interpret our curiously ambivalent attitude towards our affectivity. If I detest the idea of being totally affected, I like the idea of being partially affected. One could be surprised at this, at first glance, since the fact of being partially affected is, after all, only a lesser evil than that of being totally conditioned. But the central conditioning of myself by the outer world is supposed to be so terrifying—it is in fact the very worst of the most horrible fears of man—that everything acting to neutralize this horror is counted as good. My central conditioning is not seen as a certain evil beside which my partial conditioning would only be a lesser evil; my central conditioning is seen as an infinite evil, as 'the Evil', the Not-Being. In face of this imagined infinite negation, all that protects me from it appears to me as positive; all that seems to spare me from Not-Being necessarily appears to me as Being. This is why I attach so much value to my affective life. Even though such and such a particular affective phenomenon appears to be very disagreeable, even hateful, I cling to my affectivity. The more I vibrate affectively, the more I feel myself to 'live'; to envisage the cessation of all vibration would appear to be death to me. Of course it may happen that, after a period when I have vibrated too long and too strongly, I take refuge in a state of anaesthesia, a sort of provisional death; but as soon as my forces are restored, I again offer myself to the 'vivifying' affective vibration.

In all, I am inhabited by two contradictory partialities. Fundamentally, and in an implicit way from the point of view of totality, I refuse all conditioning, all 'affectation' of myself by the outer world. Superficially, in an explicit way and from a partial point of view, I hope to be conditioned, and I like my affectivity. I live in terms of two contradictory functions: the

implicit judgment which sees my possibility of being affected as 'Not-Being' and my explicit judgment that sees this possibility as 'Being'. This contradiction is expressed, in my concrete psychology, by the dual and Utopian nostalgia for becoming more and more insensitive to suffering and more and more sensitive to joy.

Let us examine this nostalgia more closely. I wish to be impassive in face of the world in so far as it can deny me, and to be sensitive to the world in so far as it can affirm me. I thus project outside me a contradiction which, in reality, is inside me. Thus projected, it is irreconcilable; the affirming and denying aspects of the world are always in opposition from that point of view which places them in opposition. If I wish one day to achieve a reconciliation of this inner contradiction, I must see it back at its real source. Abandoning the distinction 'joy-suffering' and uniting these two terms in the single term 'emotion', I see that my contradiction is this: I wish at the same time to be impassive to all emotion and to experience more and more emotion.

There is in fact a theoretical possibility of conciliation: I wish to experience (because to experience makes me feel my being, it affirms me) without being disturbed inside (because this disturbance denies my autonomous being). In another study we have established the distinction between 'emotion' and 'emotive state'[1]; and we have said that the man of Satori has emotions without the emotive state; this man feels without being affected, he feels without being disturbed inside. But the state of Satori is only theoretical for me today. I cannot in a practical way strive toward this impassive sensitivity; such as I am today, I cannot have the least emotion without its corresponding emotive state; that is to say that I am incapable of affectively experiencing anything without being disturbed inside. What is proposed to me in practice has the form of a dilemma. Either I experience, and then I am necessarily disturbed at my centre; or else I am not disturbed at my centre, and then I experience nothing.

I see this dilemma in fact, but that is not enough to resolve it. I must live it consciously because only our intellectual intuition is able to by-pass, while reconciling, our apparent contradictions.

[1] *The Supreme Doctrine.*

Up to the present I have not consciously lived this dilemma. I have always wanted to experience, never not to experience. It has often happened that I do not wish to experience this or that, but always with the wish to experience the opposite; I have for example refused inner agitation, but I have then wanted to experience calm. Never have I wished not to experience absolutely while refusing all the particular things offered to my feelings. 'To experience' being identified with 'to live' in my explicit conception, and 'not to experience' being identified with 'not to live'; I have always wished 'to live' and never 'not to live'.

At the risk of being tiresomely repetitive we must insist upon this part of our exposition, because it is essential. In my concrete psychology I live consciously this insoluble dilemma; I wish to live the positive aspects of life and I do not wish to live the negative aspects. This dilemma is insoluble because it is projected on to the outer world and is thus situated outside me. But this dilemma is a false expression of the following true dilemma: I wish to experience life, whatever its aspects, and I do not wish to experience life, whatever its aspects. This true dilemma can be resolved because its two terms are situated in me. It has not been resolved up to the present because, if its first term is conscious, its second term has always remained unconscious. I have never recognized my refusal to experience whatever may be; that is to say that I have never recognized what is, according to my present point of view, my refusal 'to live'.

I now recognize the existence of my refusal to live. I understand that this refusal is not the desire for my physiological death; it is the desire for a state in which my organism would function with all its sensory perceptions, but where I would feel nothing from the angle of 'affirmation-negation' of my Ego, I would experience no affective vibration, no feeling. It is the desire for a state where I would be like an automaton to which nothing was personally important.

I do not say that this refusal to experience would necessarily be more wise than the will to experience; it is neither more wise nor more foolish. It is the second pole of a dualist attitude in which, seeing life from the illusory angle of my affirmation in-so-far-as-I-am-distinct, I am compelled to cherish and to detest, at the same time, this false face of life. If I wish one day to see the true face of my life, it is not that I must replace my desire to experience by my refusal to experience, but rather that I must consciously realize my refusal and at the same time continue consciously to realize my desire. Never up to now have I really committed myself in life; I have claimed it explicitly while rejecting it implicitly. I must now reject it explicitly *and* wish for it explicitly in order to be able to commit myself to it one day.

Following this understanding, something new appears in me. This is my conscious will to experience my refusal to experience. But if this will is new in being conscious, it is not really new; it has always been with me. Whenever I was disturbed by something which I feared, there was always a resistance to this disturbance; and this is why I used to be disturbed by an internal conflict. The 'fluctuation of the soul', of which Spinoza speaks, supposes these two poles — my desire and my refusal to experience. But this resistance was only a reaction, it was like a counter-attack entirely conditioned by the attack. Of the two adversaries, the one was always on the offensive, the other always on the defensive. Thus this dualism was unable to end in a symmetrical equilibrium releasing the conciliation. The conscious recognition of my refusal to experience makes a constructive meeting possible at last.

But the conscious recognition of my refusal to experience, if it at last makes a constructive meeting possible, does not serve to organize it. It is still necessary that I should understand *how to realize* my non will to experience. Am I going to make efforts in the course of my daily life to remain impassive? If I acted thus it would be to experience that I do not experience, which would change nothing in my habitual attitude of 'willing to experience'.

In fact the question—'How can we realize our non will to experience?'—constitutes the difficult problem to which this book is dedicated. It is impossible for us to reply to it immediately. Much work on clearing the way is necessary before we can put forward the technique of 'inner counter-work'.

We have seen that our present habit of 'willing to experience' is intimately tied up with the way in which our attention functions.

It is a question then of finding how to get a new attention functioning in us. All that we can say for the moment on this subject is this: ordinary attention is conditioned by an image, and the attention in its turn conditions the will. With the new attention it would be different. This time will would act first, the non-will to experience: then this will would condition the new attention; and this finally would condition the image.

This new attention, inverse as compared with ordinary attention, we can call 'counter-attention'. We must insist again that this counter-attention will not in any way be perfect attention; it does not tend towards what Zen calls the 'glimpse into our own nature'; it will not be an effort to open the third eye; it will only be the complementary and opposite pole of the ordinary attention already present in us. It is the pole whose conscious development is necessary in order to balance ordinary attention; it will be just as imperfect, just as partial, as ordinary attention; But on the day when this imperfect counter-attention has attained its complete development in opposition to the ordinary imperfect attention, the balance obtained will permit the appearance of perfect attention; and *this will be* the vision of our own nature, the opening of the third eye, the revelation of our identity with the outer world.

The development of this counter-attention, which is the conscious refusal to experience, constitutes the preparatory work for Satori, the work whose necessity Zen recognizes. This work is not a progressive realization of the state of Satori, but a progressive preparation for the sudden revelation of this state. We should now see how this work does not belong to the type of 'doing something to liberate oneself', but really to the type of 'not-doing'.

'Spiritually' minded people oppose the life of the man who works inwardly for his liberation to the life of the average man who, according to them, does not do any inner work of this nature. This opposition is erroneous. The only real difference between these two men is that the first makes his intention to achieve total realization explicit, while the second does not make it explicit. But all men work, whether they know it or not, to overcome their fundamental lack, to resolve the problem of their unsatisfactory condition, to be rid of the dilemma 'being-nothing', to obtain, by a definite acquittal, the cessation of the inner trial. All that man does is aimed at compensating a fundamental disharmony; he seeks through all his actions, feelings and thoughts the harmonious accomplishment of himself. All human attempts come from a wish to achieve harmony. That a man should seek his harmony by obtaining money, power, bodily and mental enjoyment, or through fame, or the love of others, or through conscious states called 'superior', is of little importance fundamentally; all men aim to leave the dualistic affirmation-negation by seeking an affirmation which will be completely and finally victorious over negation. All men do incessant inner work for their liberation, whatever might be the mode under which this work presents itself; they cannot even do otherwise.

Zen tells us that it is precisely this constant liberating activity that prevents us from seeing that we are free; based on the illusion that we are slaves, this activity consolidates day after day the illusion that it implies. Zen shows us that we discover our liberty from the instant that we at last cease to do any inner work to liberate ourselves.

On the other hand, Zen does not say 'Stop doing all this inner liberating work', because that is impossible for us; all effort in this sense would only result in modifying the mode of the inner work. We cannot suppress our inner liberating work, since this work is all that our present life consists of. Besides, we have understood that there never was anything to suppress in ourselves, but that all is accomplished; the error has no positive existence. Error is only a word expressing the incomplete manifestation of the truth. We have not to abandon our inner work, whatever its mode might be; we have to build, in face of it, its antagonist and complement: an inner counter-work. This counter-work will effect our conscious refusal to experience.

Whatever might be the compensation by which a man works for his liberation, whether this compensation be 'gross' or 'spiritual', it always belongs to the domain of the will to experience. It always tends towards an experience, that is to say towards 'experiencing something'. At the extreme, in the most subtle spiritual concentrations, it is a question of experiencing 'nothing at all', which is still radically opposed to 'not-experiencing'.

All inner liberating work comes back to desiring experience of one thing or the other: the counter-work whose development is necessary in order to balance ourselves, and to offer ourselves to the revelation of our liberty, must be understood as the 'non-will to experience' which we have discussed. It is this will that is the work which is preparatory for Satori, Zen work of the type of not-doing.

More exactly, the preparatory work for Satori has two aspects: one of these is already naturally realized in us; it is the 'doing' which represents our inner, compensatory work; it is our habitual way of living, a way which follows, in all its modalities, the 'will to experience'. The other aspect is not naturally realized in us and only appears as a function of a metaphysical understanding; it is the 'not-doing' which represents the 'non-will to experience'. When Zen affirms that the preparatory work for Satori is of the type 'not-doing', it means that it neglects the 'doing' part, already realized, and concerns itself only with the 'not-doing'. On the other hand it evokes the 'doing' part when it says: 'When we are hungry we eat'. Nevertheless we are trying to show here the necessity for both aspects; our ternary harmony implies the equal confrontation of both inferior poles.

Let us see again, from different points of view, the activity of this fundamental law in our preparation for Satori. During my normal life which develops through 'doing', 'desiring to experience', I am avid in claiming the affirmation of my Ego; although the play of my attention might be alternately expansion and contraction, my general attitude is that of permanent contraction.[1] When I exercise myself in the 'non-will to experience', can I say that I am relaxed? Certainly not. My attitude this time is an inverse contraction of the preceding state. I can call it 'counter-contraction'; and it is only when the development of the counter-contraction has equalled the contraction that relaxation will appear, that is the 'letting-go' of which Zen speaks. The 'letting-go' is not something I can practise: in order to attain to 'letting-go' I must practise the 'non-will to experience' —which is something quite different.

The idea of 'revolt' haunts the philosophical thought of our

[1] Thus in the same way, in muscular activity each individual muscle fibre goes through endless alternations of contraction and decontraction.

time and we can see how we encounter it again here. My 'will to experience', which is a claim for affirmation, is a constant attitude of revolt before the inevitable Not-Self, before the inevitable condemnation in my inner trial. Efforts to accept can lessen, to some degree, the suffering of the natural revolt, but would not be able to neutralize it. The 'non-will to experience' is not an acceptance; on the contrary it corresponds to an attitude whereby I revolt no longer against the 'Not-Self', but against the first revolt by which I would reconsider this 'Not-Self': I no longer revolt against the eventual unhappy verdict of the 'trial', but against the 'trial' itself, or rather against my acceptance of this 'trial'. The 'non-will to experience' is the 'counter-revolution' balancing the revolution and permitting the final appearance of acceptance.

Vedanta tells us that we can be the spectator of the spectacle. But no direct effort is possible for us in this sense. To the degree that I wish to experience, to the degree that ordinary attention acts in me, I am identified with objects, that is I am a spectacle without a spectator. To the degree that I do not wish to experience I am on the contrary a spectator without a spectacle: and this complementary attitude is necessary in order that one day I should be able to be the 'spectator of the spectacle'.

Taken altogether, the 'non-will to experience' which develops in opposition to the 'will to experience' does not diminish the latter: it fulfils it in supporting it with its complementary contradiction. We have said earlier that we are unhappy because something too much happens, a useless complication. But we cannot undo this complication. We have to build a counter-complication which will balance the first.

This progressive development of the 'non-will to experience' in face of the 'will to experience' poses the ultimate problem of our life since, from our present point of view, that comes back to organizing in us the meeting of our 'will to live' and our 'non-will to live'.

CHAPTER 2

OUTER AND INNER PERCEPTION—SENSING AND FEELING

We have seen that by the fact of existing the inner work that I do to alleviate my anguished condition is correct but insufficient. Some 'counter-work' is necessary to balance this work and to neutralize my illusory state of enslavement. Furthermore, we have seen that this counter-work consists in consciously realizing, little by little, my 'non-will to experience'.

To come to this realization I must first of all understand what this 'experiencing' consists of that I both want and do not want. But the study of 'experiencing' presupposes—and we shall see the reasons later—that an important distinction has first been established between outer and inner perception, between 'sensing' and 'feeling'. We shall now consider this distinction.

I am in the mountains, looking at a beautiful scene. As I look at this scene a deep feeling of joy comes over me. Two perceptions co-exist in me, the visual perception of the scene and the perception of my joy. These two perceptions are two different psychological phenomena. When I see the countryside, this sensory perception is necessary which, as we said, is the elaboration in me, by resonance, of a mental image reproducing certain aspects of the outer object. This perception teaches me objectively about the outside world. Therefore, although the image perceived is an image created in my mind, we will call this perception *outer*. It depends in part upon the outer world and on the structure of this world. Ten men whose eyes are in a satisfactory functional state have the same outer perception of the countryside; all the men see such and such a peak rising above another peak; they all see that the sky is cloudless, they are in agreement on the presence of a stream here, of a house there.

My perception of my joy is of another kind; it is personal to me. One friend who accompanies me feels, in the face of the vastness of the countryside, an overwhelming suffering. Another

recognizes the beauty of the countryside but does not feel anything, and considers it absurd to be exalted or depressed by the mountains. What then is this joy that I feel? How are we to understand this new sort of perception that we shall call, in opposition to the first kind, *inner* perception?

What we have understood about outer perception will help us here. Outer perception, or sensory perception, admits, let us remember, a phenomenon of resonance which connects together, because of an identical vibration, the outer world and myself through the essential identity of our structure. It must be clearly understood that the structure which I discover in myself as a result of sensory perception does not distinguish me from another man: it is a general structure characterizing me as a human being. I perceive sensorily in so far as I am primordial man, prototypical man, not in so far as I am such and such a particular man. It is between this general human structure in which I share and the structure of the outer object that there is an essential identity (as the silver cup and the silver jug have, beneath their different forms, the same essential structure of silver). The object and I are different modes of manifestation of the Absolute Principle, but we exist by virtue of the same manifestation of the same principle, and this manifestation is the fundamental cosmic structure which makes all created things structurally identical. Inner perception also consists in a phenomenon of resonance which connects, by an identical vibration, two structures with the same essential identity. But this time the two poles between which the phenomenon of resonance is produced are both within me. The first pole, or active pole, is no longer an outer form; it is an inner image made up by my mind from sensory perception. This image, which is an aspect of my being as man in general, makes my being, as an individual man, vibrate through resonance. This personal, unique man that I am consists in a particular structure, different from my structure as man in general. At the heart of my general structure, this personal structure emanates from it in the same way as my general structure emanates from the fundamental cosmic nature.

That which enables me to know the existence and the characteristics of this personal structure is just this phenomenon of resonance which responds in me to my mental images. In the

first place I discover the existence of this personal structure by ascertaining that the same sensory image is able to produce in me and in some other man opposed resonances. I then discover that this personal structure has a dualistic nature; indeed my inner resonances are divided into 'agreeable' and 'disagreeable', joy and suffering. Some resonances are, perhaps, vague, on the dividing line between the two structural parts, but no doubt is possible about the bi-partite nature of my personal structure.

Speaking generally I could express this dualism of my inner perceptions by saying that when I am happy there is harmony between my sensory images and my personal structure, and that when I suffer there is a discord between these two poles. It is impossible to conceive a phenomenon of resonance that is a discord. In reality there is always harmony between the sensory image and my personal structure. Let us see this more clearly.

My inner perceptions constitute that psychological sphere that I can call the sphere of my likes and my dislikes, of my 'I like' and 'I do not like', of the impressions that I have of being affirmed or denied; in other words, the sphere of my positive and negative affinities with the outer world perceived through my sense-organs. These affinities are made up of associations connecting my sensory images to the image either of the affirmation of my existence or of its negation. These associations are in part innate and in part acquired in the course of the circumstances of my life.

Everything proceeds as if there were in me two representations of the world: the one belonging to the aspects of the world which are associated with the affirmation of my existence, the other to the aspects of the world associated with the negation of my existence. These two representations are like two different retractions of my sensory perceptions of the world in the mass of my personal being. One of these refractions could be called positive and the other negative; the first constitutes a world of 'Self', the second a world of 'Not-Self'. When the inner world 'Self' enters into resonance as a result of a mental image associated with my affirmation, I feel this vibration as a joy; when on the contrary my inner world 'Not-Self' enters into resonance as a result of a mental image associated with my negation, I feel this vibration as suffering.

As we have said, the composition of these two inner worlds depends upon associations which can be innate or acquired. If a child of four feels glad when hearing music, if as we say the child is a born musician, that means that music is an important part of his positive representation of the world; but music can be a part later on of the inner negative world in this same being, if it is associated with events which have forcefully denied that being. One sees that this inner bi-partite world, which constitutes my inner structure, is none other than my memory; but this idea of memory must be understood here in its widest context; it extends beyond the bounds of my personal life and includes the life of all my forebears; one sees here the Platonic 'reminiscences'. When I meet for the first time a being or a place for which I feel a particularly intense positive affinity, I have the impression that I have always known this being or this place and that I have rediscovered it.

My mental images are thus situated between the non-dualistic outer world and the dualistic inner world. They are produced by resonance caused by the activity of the outer world. They in turn cause an activation which makes my inner world vibrate by resonance, either in its 'Self' part or in its 'Not-Self' part, causing me joy or suffering. There exist two phenomena of resonance, two perceptions: the outer or sensory perception that we can call 'sensing' and the inner perception that we can call 'feeling'.

Great differences are found between the two structures which enter into resonance during the two perceptions. My general human structure corresponds to the Universe as it is, non-dualistic[1]; it is therefore non-dualistic itself and all its aspects are harmoniously unified; it is me in-so-far-as-I-am-*not*-distinct, in so far as I am similar to all other men. It is a microcosm similar to the macrocosm, it is primordial man, a replica of all creation. My personal structure, on the contrary, corresponds to the inner world registered in my memory, and this world is dualistic, divided into positive and negative; therefore it is itself dualistic. Because it is not one, the various aspects of its two halves are not

[1] Dualism and duality must not be confused. The Universe implies a conciliated duality, Yin and Yang conciliated by Tao; but, precisely because of this conciliation by Tao, this duality is not a dualism.

harmoniously unified: it is multiple. It is me in-so-far-as-I-wish-to-be-distinct.

Psychologically, my personal structure corresponds to the multiplicity of my 'Selves', divers personages which do not know each other. My general human structure corresponds to the unique non-personal 'I', which supports all my 'Selves'.

My general human structure is me in so far as I sense, that is to say in so far as I make mental images from outer forms or from mental images already made. My personal structure is me in so far as I feel, that is to say in so far as I have emotions resulting from my mental images.

My general human structure corresponds to my cerebro-spinal system which receives emanations from the outer world and constructs mental images. My personal structure corresponds to my vegetative nervous system, otherwise known as autonomous (me-in-so-far-as-I-am-distinct), or vago-sympathetic (dualism); this system is not concerned with the outer world but only with my inner world; it does not react to the outer world but to the blessings or curses that my existence receives from the outer world, either directly or through my mental images. I have thus two brains: one collected, unified in my cerebro-spinal system; the other diffused and spread throughout my whole organism, intimately connected with each of the innumerable cells which make up my body. These two brains are the material aspects of my two structures; they are the vibrating equipment which corresponds to my two sorts of perceptive resonances, to my sensing and my feeling.

Having established the distinction between outer and inner perception we should study, more especially, inner perception, feeling. What happens in me when I *feel* joy and suffering? This perception is quite different from sensory perception. Indeed with sensory perception there was a resonance between the outer world and my organism, between the outer object and me, that is to say between two distinct creatures constituting beween them a complete harmony. The mountain that I look at is a microcosm in the same way that I am one, and is distinct from my microcosm. Because this mountain is truly distinct from me the mental image that it conditions in me by resonance maintains an autonomy that enables me to grasp it. So I can say that

I sense the mountain. But with inner perception which results in my joy, there is not a resonance between two distinct microcosms; there is a resonance between two structural modes of a single microcosm, of my single being. My mental image, distinct from me in that it results from the emanation of an outer object, is no longer distinct in that, being grasped by me, it now excites my personal structure. So the vibration of my personal structure, by resonance with the image, does not possess any autonomy and could not as a consequence be in any way grasped. The vibration of my general structure, when I sensed, was localized in me in such a way that this vibrating part, distinct from my wholeness, existed for this wholeness. But the vibration of my personal structure, when I feel, is not localized; it touches my whole being; nothing remains which my vibrating wholeness can stand in relation to. So it is impossible for me to grasp my joy. If I can say that I sense the mountain, I cannot say that I feel my joy.

If I cannot say that I feel my joy, what is it then that I am conscious of at that moment? We find the answer to this question in a common saying: 'I feel glad'. When I feel, it is myself of which I am conscious, my psychosomatic organism. If sensing is to be conscious of the outer world, feeling is consciousness of my own existence.

This consciousness of myself that I wish to study now must be well defined. It is a global synthetic consciousness, not fragmentary and analytic. It is not connected with the objective consciousness that I can have of my hand by observing it as I observe another object, nor with the consciousness that I can have of one of my psychological states by isolating it from the others. It is definitely a global consciousness of existing. It is a very particular type of consciousness of which, as we are going to see, one can only speak in the negative; it informs me, in fact, about the quantitive variation of an opacity which seems to separate my consciousness from consciousness itself; that is to say that it indicates to me to what extent I am not feeling myself 'to be'.

This is a delicate point which we must go into more deeply. When I am tired, depressed, in a 'negative state', I feel my organism as heavy, dense, opaque. When I am in good form, full

of health and strength, I feel my organism as light, subtle, transparent. If I should smoke opium, or take cocaine, my organism would seem to be so 'tenuous' that I should scarcely feel it any more at all; I should then have the feeling of being nothing but pure thought; at the same time I should feel extraordinarily happy. Throughout the subjectively ascending series constituted by these three experiences, I feel myself less and less as an organism; my physical body and my thoughts appear to be more and more transparent and light; my consciousness of existence diminishes in intensity; I feel myself less and less as a distinct person; my coenaesthesia is manifested less and less. To the degree that my physical body and my thoughts, while diminishing in opacity, lose their reality, my consciousness acquires, on the contrary, more and more reality. The more my thoughts become rapid, light, without importance, unreal, the more my consciousness is felt as real, important. At the same time the more real my consciousness feels to be, the more I feel I am 'being', independently of my body and my thoughts. I could say, in opposition to Descartes, 'I do not think, therefore I am'. How can we interpret this immediate perception of my consciousness? My 'feeling', we have said, is the perception of the variations of my consciousness of existing as a physical organism and as thoughts. My body and my thoughts, being the two aspects of the manifestation of my 'being', the perception of their existence is perception of the manifestation of my 'being'. Now the more the perception of the manifestation of my 'being' becomes subtle, grows lighter, that is to say that the less I feel myself as existing, the more I have the impression of being and the more happy I feel. It is then as if my consciousness of existing personally were the inverse reflection of my consciousness of 'being': the less I feel, the more I have the impression of approaching the moment when I will have the consciousness of 'being', the moment when my consciousness will be conscious of itself. That is why we said earlier that my global consciousness of existing could be spoken of only in the negative; it informs me, not about my being, but about the variations of an opacity which seems to separate my consciousness from the consciousness of itself, which seems to separate me from my 'being'. The consciousness of the manifestation of my Principle seems to separate me from the Principle.

We cannot go any further for the moment, for lack of another distinction which will be the subject of the following chapter. The goal of our present study was to establish the existence in us of two different perceptions: sensory or outer perception which gives us a positive knowledge of the world; and inner coenaesthetic perception which seems to give us positive knowledge of our existence, but which in reality gives us a negative knowledge of the illusory absence of our 'being'.

CHAPTER 3

'EXPERIENCING'

The distinction that we have established between 'sensing' and 'feeling' will now enable us to broach the subject of 'experiencing'. This psychological process differs from the other two although it is intimately connected with them.

Current usage confuses the three notions of 'sensing', 'feeling' and 'experiencing'; as witness to this is the fact that these three terms are commonly used one for the other. The psychologist himself, although he easily distinguishes between 'experiencing' and sensory perception, is tempted to confuse 'experiencing' with inner perception.

However, the word 'experience' as it is normally used puts us on the road to the right distinction. 'Experience' is used in the phrase 'he has experience' in the sense that he has the wherewithal to judge, to evaluate. Experience is by no means a perception, neither an inner nor an outer perception; it is a judgment in terms of some aspect of the outer world that I perceive, which in turn is a consequence of what I feel about that aspect. It is an evaluation of my 'sensing', and of the thing sensed, as a consequence of my 'feeling'. It is an intellectual operation by which I evaluate some sensory perception, some mental image, according to the influence that it has on my consciousness of existing.

Thus, to take up our example again, when I see the mountain and I feel happy, there is not, up to that point, any experiencing; but when I think 'The mountain is beautiful, I like the mountain', then I 'experience'. In this intellectual operation of experiencing we must distinguish again two elements: a mental association and a judgment. I associate first of all my sensory image of the mountain with my consciousness of existing which is modified by joy. I associate them in a causal relation; I think that the mountain causes gladness. Then, by virtue of this causal association, I say that the mountain is 'good'; I decree, as we will show later on, that the mountain 'should exist'.

Theoretically, these two elements which co-exist in 'experiencing' are not inseparable; the first could occur without the second. I could mentally associate the mountain with my gladness without having to make a judgment that gives positive value to the mountain, I could limit myself to thinking: 'The image of the mountain brings me closer to a consciousness of "being", and because of that it appears to me as constructive, positive'. I could equally well say that the sensory perception of an evil-smelling slum takes me further from a consciousness of 'being' and therefore appears to me to be destructive, negative. In other words, the mental operation associating 'sensing' and 'feeling' could not possibly be a judgment of that which I sense. It could not be 'have the experience of' and could not, therefore, result in attributing to the thing perceived a positive or negative quality, 'good' or 'bad'.

In practice it happens otherwise and judgment is inevitable. The reason for this is not in the occurrence itself of my contact with the outer world and it is not the three processes of 'sensing', 'feeling' and 'experiencing' which constitute this experience. It lies elsewhere, in certain implicit convictions or 'beliefs' or 'false identifications', which exist in me and which are independent of the experience. These 'beliefs' form a chain and we shall enumerate the elements in the order that they are found.

The first link in the chain is the illusory belief that I am only my body, that is: *exclusive identification with my organism.* My discrimination between my organism and the rest of the universe establishes two terms that I take as mutually exclusive entities in regard to the Absolute One; I identify myself with my organism and not with the rest of the universe. The illusion here does not lie in my identification with my organism, but in the exclusive character of the identification; the illusion of my belief does not consist in believing that 'I' am my organism, but in believing that 'I' equally am not the rest of the universe. My principle, that is to say the 'I', is equally the principle of the whole universe. All illusory conviction is only so because it is limited, incomplete, bringing with it a counter-conviction.

My illusory conviction of being only my organism is my fundamental error, my incomplete truth; it is an aspect of my 'Original Sin'. Before going on to other links in my chain of

ignorance we must see that this primordial error is truly, as we have said, independent of experience, although it is actualized in me as a result of experience. When I was in the womb I only identified myself exclusively with my organism in a potential way, since the rest of the universe did not exist for me. It was necessary that I should be born and that I should come in contact with the outer world in order that I should discriminate between this world and my organism; but it is as a result of this contact that my exclusive identification with my body is actualized. The contact between the outer world and my organism, however, was a union through resonance in a structural identity, and this union in itself in no way brought about an irrevocable discrimination and an exclusive identification. This identification has appeared in me as an *interpretation* of the experience and, though this interpretation has happened as a result of the experience, it is independent of it. Common sense may find the idea strange that the new-born interprets its first contact with the outer world. That is because common sense wrongly confuses the *actualization* of the thought with its *expression*. Without here going too deeply into this important question, we must speak about it a little. Between the Unconscious Principle, the timeless source of all thought, and conscious thought formulated in words, there exists a mental operation which consists in the non-formulated actualization of thoughts. The mind of the new-born is clearly incapable of consciously formulating any thought, but he has all that is necessary to actualize in him the most simple thoughts, the most general thoughts. 'There is something other than my organism' and 'I am my organism' are the elementary thoughts which are actualized in the mind of the newborn human being, though this being might never make them into a conscious formulation during the whole course of his subsequent existence. In the same way they are actualized in the mind of an animal—as its behaviour will show—although it never can consciously formulate them. We should notice that the more elementary a thought, the more a thought is general, embracing a multitude of particular concepts, *the more easily it is actualized, but the more difficult it is to express it consciously*. All newborn infants actualize metaphysical thoughts of an immense generality (as also does an

animal), but few adults come to the point where they consciously take hold of thoughts of this kind. In the evolution of thoughts of the human being, the unformulated actualization of thoughts goes from the most general to the most particular, while consciously formulated thoughts go from the most particular to the most general.

Now that we have established this erroneous interpretation of experience, we can see all the 'beliefs' which flow from it. My exclusive identification with my organism engenders in me the '*illusory hypothesis that I-am-absolutely-in-so-far-as-distinct*'. From this comes my claim to verify this hypothesis, *my claim to 'feel absolutely-in-so-far-as-distinct'*. From this comes *my illusory conviction that I lack something essential* which will mean that this claim will never be satisfied. From this comes my *necessary* search for an experience which will procure for me the consciousness of 'being-absolutely-in-so-far-as-distinct'. From this comes my *necessary* search for a contact with the outer world which will bring me this experience. From this comes my search for a certain aspect of the outer world which will show itself capable of giving me this contact. From this comes my necessity to evaluate, to experience the aspects of the world in order to know their aptitude for giving me the consciousness that I claim. We see how the necessity to experience is at the end of this long chain of illusory convictions. Everything happens in me as if I *must* seek, through experience, a hypothetical contact with the outer world which could give me the absolute consciousness of my 'being-absolutely-in-so-far-as-distinct', i.e. my consciousness of being, such as I conceive it today.

Soon we shall use all these ideas to show that our experiencing is necessarily, in our present state, a judgment. But in parentheses we wish to explain why it is that our search for a consciousness of 'being-absolutely-in-so-far-as-distinct' can only be in vain. It is not because the premisses of this search are illusory. The illusory character of the premisses can only imply that the conclusion is equally illusory. But if the premisses seem real to me and if the success of the search *appears* to me to be as real as the premisses, it would be a success *for me*, in other words, without 'being-absolutely-in-so-far-as-distinct', I would feel that I am.

In fact, not only can I evidently not 'be-absolutely-in-so-far-as-distinct', I cannot even feel that I am. Indeed, as we have seen earlier, I have the impression of approaching my consciousness of 'being' to the degree that I obtain the diminution of my consciousness of existing. Without doubt it is possible for me, thanks to a material stimulus (opium) or subtle stimulus (some mental image brought about with intensity by an exercise in concentration) to attain an ecstatic state where my consciousness of existing is abolished and my consciousness of 'being' exalted. But something will always be lacking in the *perfect* satisfaction of my claim: the stability of this satisfaction. I can attain such a state, but I cannot remain there indefinitely (which would correspond in time to the absolute or intemporal character of my consciousness of 'being'). Indeed, either I fall from this ecstacy that I have reached to a more ordinary state, where I again encounter my consciousness of existing, an obstacle to my consciousness of 'being', or else I stay in this state where I no longer have the consciousness of existing and die as a result (since I can no longer uphold my existence in a state where my consciousness of existing has disappeared); and in death my consciousness of 'being-absolutely-in-so-far-as-distinct' would necessarily disappear.

The search for the consciousness of 'being-absolutely-in-so-far-as-distinct', a search effected through 'experiencing', thus brings with it an internal contradiction; the steps that I take to bring myself to this consciousness tend towards causing the complete disappearance of my distinct being. It is like the donkey that belonged to the miser: the miser wants to have a donkey who lives without eating; thus he gives him nothing to eat; he really owns, for a time, a donkey who lives without eating, but this result cannot be obtained with stability and the donkey dies. In tending towards my distinct 'being' I also necessarily tend towards my distinct 'not-being'.

We can come back now to the development of the question which we interrupted. 'Experiencing' connotes a causal association between my 'sensing' and my 'feeling', followed by a judgment; it is possible for us to conceive the association theoretically without the consequent judgment, since the causal association

between sensing and feeling does not contain in itself the necessity for a judgment. In practice, however, this judgment is inevitable. Indeed, independently of experience itself, there exists in me the belief in an experience which is capable of giving me a consciousness of 'being', and the tendency is for me to be compelled to discover this experience. It is this tendency which makes me evaluate all my experiences, to evaluate all aspects of the outer world with which I come in contact. Since I believe that among these 'ten thousand things' there is one which will reveal the secret of my 'being', I cannot have experience of any of these things without judging it in relation to my search. *In practice, to experience is to judge.*

To experience connotes, then, beyond the association between sensing and feeling, the judgment of the thing sensed. But what exactly is 'judging'? Judging also consists of a mental association, but is different from the former association and grafted on to it. When I see the mountain and I feel glad about it, a first causal association is established between the perception of the mountain and the joy, an association which one could express thus: 'The sight of the mountain makes me glad'. But when I happen to think 'How wonderful this mountain is', when I confer on the mountain a judgment of approval, it is no longer a question of a causal association and an abstract image which we must now define. Beneath the modalities of indefinite variety by which our judgments are expressed, they are never other than of two sorts: approving or disapproving. Let us recall that our judgments evaluate whether a thing perceived is able to bring us nearer to the consciousness of our 'being'; there are then, for each one of our judgments, but two alternatives: either a thing is able to bring me nearer to the consciousness of my 'being' or else it is not able to do so. All judgment is thus identifying an association either between the thing perceived and my 'being', or between the thing perceived and my 'nothingness'. This association grafts itself on to the causal association between 'sensing' and 'feeling'. If my perception brings me closer to a consciousness of 'being' my judgment identifies it with 'that which must exist'; if my perception takes me further from a consciousness of 'being' my judgment identifies it with 'that which must not exist'.

We shall see now in which respect my judgment is relative and in which respect it is absolute. It is relative in that when I decree that such and such a thing is able to bring me closer to a consciousness of my 'being', I see that this 'getting closer' has *more* or *less* importance. It is absolute in that this consciousness of my 'being', to which I decree that a thing perceived brings me closer, is absolute, since it is a consciousness of being *absolutely-in-so-far-as-distinct*. When I judge I appear to give relative values to things, but in reality I give to them *relative degrees of an absolute value*, either positive or negative. The positive value that I give to one thing and the negative value that I give to another thing are not absolute, but the discrimination that I make between positiveness and negativeness is absolute, because the discrimination that I make between getting nearer to, or further away from, my consciousness of my 'being' is absolute. And it cannot be otherwise while I believe myself separated from consciousness of my 'being'. The obvious absurdity of this confusion between the absolute and the relative in the same scheme of things is explained by the illusory nature of the convictions about which we have spoken and which support our judgment of value. The identifying associations which constitute our judgments are the 'false identifications' which the Vedanta shows exist in all of us.

It is the constant rearrangement of my 'experiencing', or judging, which builds my personal structure. A catalogue is created of the aspects of the outer world of which I have more or less positive or more or less negative experience, thus moulding the structure of my inner world in its two aspects 'Self' and 'Not-Self'. My 'experiencing' and my personal structure furthermore reciprocally condition each other; indeed, according to my former judgments, I pursue my experimental investigation of the world and, according to my new experiences, I rearrange my former judgments which constitute my personal structure. My 'experiencing' is directed by my memory and then conditions my memory.

Since 'experiencing' is judgment, the question arises as to the partial or impartial character of this judgment. This question is rapidly resolved: all judgment is partial if one regards it absolutely. Indeed, all judgment necessarily uses a formal criterion and this criterion is relative and it has two contrary aspects: the most impartial judge in the criminal courts is partial in that he is 'against' murder and 'for' the respect of the life of others; my 'experiencing' is partial in that it is 'for' getting closer to the consciousness of my 'being' and 'against' getting further from it. The only impartial judgment imaginable would be the one which uses the absolute criterion of the One Reality; but since this Reality resides in all particular things in an identical manner and since all particular things are therefore equal before it, the judgment is abolished. *'Experiencing' is always a partial interpretation.*

Now that we have clearly seen what 'experiencing' is, we come back to the ensemble of three processes which function during all of our situations: sensing, feeling and experiencing.

This functional triad is disposed in a linear fashion: 'sensing' is at one end of the series, 'experiencing' is at the other end, and 'feeling' is situated between the two. 'Sensing' produces an indefinite variety of mental forms since it obediently reproduces the indefinitely varied aspects of the outer world. This supple process adapts itself exactly to the changes of universal life. It represents relative multiplicity.

'Experiencing' produces a single, but nevertheless dualist mental form, a categorical assertion indicated by the signs + or —: 'this must be' or 'this must not be'. This rigid process represents the Absolute One; it is like the dualist projection on the formal plane. 'Feeling', the world of our inner states, produces psychological forms representing a multiplicity simplified; it is a certain integration of 'sensing'. These intermediate forms are in a state of constant rearrangement, and correspond to the *samskaras* of the Vedantic terminology and to the *complexes* of the psycho-analyst.

The forms of 'sensing' have a relative reality; the dualist form of 'experiencing' symbolically represents the Absolute and Informal Reality; the forms of 'feeling' have an illusory reality.

In my inner trial concerning my 'being' and my 'nothingness', a trial in which each of my experiences constitutes an episode, 'sensing' represents the facts of the case, 'experiencing' represents the judges, and 'feeling' represents the witnesses. The witnesses are the necessary intermediaries between the facts of the

case and the judge. The judge interprets the case by referring it back to the witnesses. Thus 'feeling' is a middle term between 'sensing' and 'experiencing', while 'experiencing' ties 'sensing' and 'feeling' together.

We should look more closely at how these three processes mutually condition each other. Analytical theories immobilize the elements analyzed; they make them into a *static* vision in which it seems that 'sensing' conditions 'feeling' and 'feeling' conditions 'experiencing'; indeed I perceive sensorily first, then my coenaesthesis is modified, and finally I judge according to this modification.

In reality these processes are *dynamic*: I do not perceive without wishing to perceive; I do not feel without wishing to feel; I do not experience without wishing to experience. We have seen just now that the claim to take hold of my 'being' consciously during the course of a contact with the outer world exists in me before the contact itself and constitutes the principle director. This claim moulds my vital force into a 'will to experience' and it is thus this will which comes first. Then the 'will to experience' conditions the 'will to feel' and the 'will to feel' conditions the 'will to sense'.

These two inverse series are both true in a certain way. From a chronological point of view, it is 'sensing' which starts, but from a causal point of view it is the 'will to experience' which comes first; I wish to feel *because* I wish to experience, I wish to sense *because* I wish to feel.

CHAPTER 4

THE WILL TO EXPERIENCE: ITS CONTRADICTORY NATURE

The preceding study has shown us that 'experiencing' is a judgment of partiality and is qualitatively absolute. On the other hand it is a dynamic process: I only experience because I *wish to experience.*

This wish to experience is constraining, it is a *need.* The source of this constraint lies in the will by which the Absolute Principle brings about its manifestation. Each creature wills its 'being' absolutely because the Principal Being wills itself absolutely in each being. From the moment when I identify myself exclusively with my organism, my claim 'to-be-absolutely-in-so-far-as-distinct' is absolute; my search for the consciousness of my absolute being is necessary, and constraining.

In this present chapter we shall study the activity of our 'will to experience' and the inner contradiction that it contains. We shall thus show that this will, correctly speaking, is absurd and that it could never arrive at the goal towards which it tends. But showing that the 'will to experience' is absurd must not be understood as a condemnation, as a judgment decreeing that this will should not exist. We only establish this absurdity in order to affirm ultimately the necessity to bring about in us, for the sake of our harmonization, an absurdity in the contrary sense which will be the 'non will to experience'.

In order to understand clearly the inner contradiction which our 'will to experience' contains, we must first rid ourselves of a wrong interpretation and see that this contradiction does not exist in the dualism 'Me-Outer World'. I wish to evaluate the outer world in order to find there the contact which will give me my consciousness of 'being'. This evaluation is a function of my personal structure, and uses my 'feeling' as a criterion. But the experience of the contact with the outer world consists in a double resonance phenomenon which concerns the world and

my personal structure in an equal manner. Therefore, to evaluate the world as a function of my structure is just the same as evaluating my personal structure as a function of the world. The 'will to experience' is just as much *the will to experience myself as it is the will to experience the world.* The contradiction which lies in the 'will to experience' does not oppose the outer world and myself; it does not consist in the dualist 'Me-Outer World'.

We must now see how to account for this non-dualism between the outer world and myself in my 'will to experience'. When I go to the world in order to experience, it is not the world which interests me, but this consciousness of absolute 'being' that I wish to find in my contact with the outer world. Nor is it 'me' as my organism which interests me, but this consciousness of being which I wish to find in offering my organism to the outer world. The outer world and my own organism are simply two means used conjointly for the same end. If I should find my consciousness of being, these two means would immediately become equally useless to me. When a man has an ecstatic experience, or else has the impression of being fulfilled, he loses all interest in the outer world and in his own organism; this loss of interest can be interpreted by the phrase 'I can now die'. If I undertake something to which I attach an absolute value, an undertaking whose success appears to me to be the experience which can realize the consciousness of my being, I think: 'I must not die before having completed it'; and this implies that I should be able to die without inconvenience after this experience. With regard to my 'will to experience', the outer world and my organism are useful together and together cease to be useful.

This non-dualism of the outer world and my organism is expressed psychologically by the notion of my 'states'. At each moment I am in a certain 'state'. One usually speaks of an 'inner state' or 'inner condition', but in that which concerns my subjective view of things my 'state' is as much outer as inner. When I am in a 'negative state', when I am in a 'bad mood', I feel both the outer world and myself as being equally negative. When I am in a 'positive state', euphoric, I feel both the outer world and myself as being equally positive. *My 'state' sets up a sort of vortex*

which tends to fixate my 'experiencing': I see the world as overcast because I am sad; I am sad because I see the world as overcast; the way in which I experience the world and the way in which I experience myself condition each other like the reflections of an object in two mirrors which are face to face.

This stabilizing tendency—which corresponds in the psychic world to inertia in the physical world—is well expressed by the word 'state'. There is not immobility in my state itself; while I am in a happy or unhappy state I feel the vital force continually moving in me; my state is a dynamic process; but this process brings with it the tendency to stabilize the existing feeling. My 'state' consists precisely in this tendency of my vital movement to persevere in the form in which it finds itself; my 'state' does not bring with it any tendency to modify itself. If in fact it does change from one moment of the day to another, it is because new contacts intervene between the outer world and myself, by way of the psyche or by way of the physical. My 'state' is comparable to a gyroscope which possesses, by virtue of its rotation, the tendency to immobilize its axis in the position where circumstances put it.

We are beginning to see the contradiction which lies in my 'will to experience'. *If this will is originally a tendency to try ceaselessly to experience, until obtaining the perfect 'state' where I will have consciousness of my 'being', it acts in fact as a tendency to immobilize the imperfect 'state' in which I am at each moment, as a tendency, in other words, to continue to experience what I am in the process of experiencing.* When we analyzed the illusory and implicit convictions which are the origin of my 'will to experience', we saw that this will is an effort to bring me closer to my consciousness of being through the diminution of my consciousness of existing. Now we see that my 'will to experience' acts as a tendency to fix me in my present consciousness of existing. Truly there is a discord here which we must explain in order to deepen our understanding of the problem.

Before explaining this contradiction which is at the heart of the 'will to experience' itself, we must observe better still how it acts in us. I am going to fight a duel; I think that I will perhaps be dead in a few hours; I suddenly see as priceless all that which

my life would have been able to hold and which, until now, I have not known was possible; I evoke everything of which the possibility is perhaps going to be destroyed by my death. I ask myself how I have been able to live in this blind inertia. I am certain, if I should survive the encounter, henceforth to act quite differently. The duel passes without incident; it can happen that, under the influence of shock, I might do different things, but I certainly do not live them in a different way; I experience perhaps other contacts with the outer world, but always with the tendency to experience what I am in the process of experiencing.

It is not necessary furthermore that death should be close for these realisations to be made; it can happen that one evening I might decide that I have nothing further to live for, that all my years are fleeing; I have then the poignant feeling of not yet having grasped what it is necessary for me to grasp, of having 'wasted my life'; the next evening everything will be the same. These two examples show how there coexist in me the tendency to seek, endlessly, new experiences and my tendency to fixate my present experience. My tendency to seek endlessly new experience acts in me in such a way that I see my life abstractly, in a general theoretical way; my tendency to fixate my present experience acts in me in such a way that I see my life concretely, in a practical way. Theoretically I wish for the unknown, in a movement which does not expect to stop before the ultimate goal; practically I can only wish for the known, in a movement towards an immobility. In this movement towards immobility, my will is not a will of movement, but of immobility towards which movement is taking me. Put another way, even when I appear to wish to investigate the nature of things, I really wish to establish myself in a state which, immobilizing a certain relationship between the world and myself, is quite contrary to such an investigation. My will to experience is in principle a will to investigate the world, but when it acts it does not act as a moving investigation, flowing from one experience to another; it acts as a static investigation, obstinately rummaging through the present experience.

The explanation of this dualism, this contradiction between the theory and the practice of my will to experience, is contained in my implicit illusory convictions. The hypothesis according to which I 'am-absolutely-in-so-far-as-distinct' engenders the claim for a contact with the world which will give me consciousness of my 'being', but this original claim only envisages the outside world from the angle of my possible affirmation. The illusion that is here does not lie in the fact that I envisage the world as affirming, but in the fact that I envisage it as exclusively affirming (a corollary to my exclusive identification with my organism). My theoretical illusory convictions thus engender my will, also theoretical, to experiment with the unknown; in that the unknown is supposedly only affirming, my 'will to experience' is the will to experiment with the unknown. My drive towards existence is, originally, a pure movement which ought not to stop before attaining the consciousness of my 'being'. The new-born goes forward to life full of confidence.

But, when this movement is effected practically, all the aspects of the outer world that I experience will reveal themselves as being negative as well as positive. Either these two sides of practical reality are manifest together (the thorns of the rose) or else, if the affirming side alone is manifest, the negating side is also present in the insecurity of the experience (I am rich but I can be ruined; someone loves me, but she can cease to love me, and so on). This unexpected duality of experience destroys the purity of my initial movement, a movement which presupposed a world that was only positive. I left for a voyage of investigation in an immobile world; and here I am, immobilized in order to investigate a world which, because of the instability of life, takes place before my eyes. I left for an *activity* and here I am being *agitated* on one spot.

One might be surprised that, lingering in the imperfect 'state' that I am in at present, I do not leave it in order to go towards a 'state' still unknown to me. But my search, by virtue of its metaphysical origin, is qualitative, not quantitative. In order to verify the hypothesis according to which I 'am-absolutely-in-so-far-as-distinct', I seek a pure affirmation of myself by the outer world. It is the purity of this affirmation which is important to me; a single pure affirmation, however slight it might be, would be sufficient to verify the hypothesis. This eventual pure affirmation thus represents for me Absolute Reality. Since it is given to me as possible, in an experience where pure affirmation lies

side by side with my negation, this possibility fascinates me; it is of little importance that it is thus given commingled with its opposite. I cling to the experience in the hope of distilling from it pure affirmation.

We can try to express this by a parable. Suppose a man feels himself threatened by some tyrant, with imminent death, as long as he is unable to find a fragment of pure gold, and that he has not yet found it. This man sees in the mud of a stream a yellow glow which could indicate to him the presence of a nugget of gold. If his desire were relative he would pass on his way with the hope that he would find elsewhere a nugget that he would only have to pick up. But he is activated by an absolute and urgent need; furthermore he is fascinated by the yellow glow; he stops and feels about in the pool for the gold. If he leaves this pool it is because another pool shows him another yellow glow; then only is he willing to let go his first investigation and undertake a new one. But this movement has only carried him to a new immobility; he feels about in the mud in the same way, seeking to grasp the nugget which keeps evading him. He seems to *act* in moving from one pool to another; in reality he does no more than *fidget* on the spot, in one place, then in another.

Thus I have the tendency to cling to 'the state' that I am experiencing at the moment in the hope that its negative aspect will be destroyed; my 'will to experience' is not interpreted as a tendency to act towards the unknown, but by a tendency to agitate myself in the situation I know, in the hope of discovering there my pure affirmation. If I examine my past life honestly, I see enacted there my tendency towards *repetition*; as the years go by, I am fixed more and more in certain stereotyped relations with the outer world. If I am ambitious, if I find in domination over others a feeling of affirmation, I persevere in the search for power; a hundred or more times I have had occasion to ascertain that this experience does not give me the perfect and definite consciousness of my 'being' which is my real goal, yet I continue to agitate myself in this experience in the hope of attaining this goal. If I am greedy for riches, I continue in the same way to agitate myself in order to obtain or conserve my riches, although these have never given me perfect satisfaction. If I am masochistic and so envisage my affirmation in a valiant submission to

the spitefulness of others or of fate, I persevere in my 'unhappy' state in the hope one day of eliminating all negativity. The instability of certain people is no exception to this rule; they untiringly repeat the experience of changing homes, or jobs, or friends; in spite of appearances it is still a case of agitating on the spot. The gestures that I make, and that seem to manifest an inner activity, are only jumps from one 'state' to another 'state'. If, being sad, I go to a cinema in order to change my mood, I only wish to leave my 'state' in order to be in another 'state', another by its tonality but not by its nature.

My 'state', a consequence of my implicit, illusory convictions, is a way of functioning, equally illusory, where the reconciliation in me of 'being' and 'becoming' is attempted; the becoming is symbolically represented by agitation, the being by repetition 'on the spot'. My 'will to experience'—agitation on the spot, movement and fixity—explains my attitude towards *time*. On the one hand there is the present that can be experienced, the actual moment, and it is to my present experience that I am fixed; on the other hand I agitate myself in this experience with the hope of seeing it modified in the direction of pure affirmation. Thus I am projected in imagination into the future. Theoretically, I move with my duration and as a consequence I live in a continually new present: practically, I am immobilized in my duration which flows on in spite of me and I live in a dream of the future continually repeated. But when I recall my memories I relive them in an experience of an imaginative present and I agitate myself in this experience in the hope of taking from it a pure affirmation, a hope that projects me into the future. My 'will to experience necessarily projects me into the future and it is impossible for me, with this attitude, consciously to live the present moment. My will to experience is a claim; as soon as there is a claim, there is a future.

There is another way of showing the inherent dualism in my will to experience and to explain why this will tends paradoxically towards an experience fixed in my present experience. When I listed the chain of implicit illusory convictions, I expressed myself in positive phrases. But since thought emanates from the Unconscious Principle, it divides this Principle into two. I can then go over this list and express myself just as correctly

in negative phrases. The exclusive identification with my organism thus becomes my non-identification with the outer world and from this non-identification with the outer world this hypothesis develops: I am perhaps not-absolutely-in-so-far-as-distinct. The claim that results from this hypothesis is no longer the claim to verify that I am absolutely-in-so-far-as-distinct, but to refute the reverse hypothesis. From this negative point of view, my search no longer has for its goal an experience which realizes the hypothetical consciousness of my 'being', but an experience which abolishes the hypothetical consciousness of my 'not-being'; I no longer seek to obtain the pure affirmation of my being, but the pure negation of my 'nothingness'.

If the positive expression of my illusory convictions explains my fixation on the more or less positive side of my present experience, their negative expression explains that I might equally well be fascinated by the more or less negative side of this experience. I can just as well fidget with a negative, in order to refute and get rid of it, as with a positive in order to purify and grasp it.

The agitation on the spot by which my will to experience is interpreted tends to be at the same time an attempt to grasp my being and to refute my 'not-being'. Sometimes it is the aspect of 'grasping my being' which predominates and my 'will to experience' appears as an *avidity for existence*; sometimes it is the aspect 'refuting my not-being' which predominates and my 'will to experience' then appears as *fear of existence*. Avidity for existence and fear of existence nevertheless tend equally to render me a slave of my present experience, of my experiencing.

CHAPTER 5

THE BIRTH OF THOUGHT

In the preceding chapters we have established the existence of our wish to experience and its contradictory nature, its absurdity. It would seem, then, that we should be able to pass on without further ado to the study of its antidote, the 'non-wish to experience'. However, we shall pause to consider the way in which our psyche normally functions; we are going to observe the way that our 'will to experience' conditions the play of our attention, of our imagination—that is, of our conscious thought—and of our states of mental concentration and dispersion.

In spite of appearances, we shall not waste time by adopting this procedure. Indeed, the way by which we shall ultimately balance our will to experience would be purely theoretical and ineffective if we did not first gather correct observations on this will. It would be impossible for us to balance the illusory manner according to which our psycho-somatic machine functions if we did not know this manner very well, if we had not in fact completely clarified our understanding.

At each moment there is a mental image in my consciousness. This image can come from the immediate outer world and it can also come from my inner world, from the immense reservoir of images that constitutes my memory. From where does the image come that exists at the present moment in my consciousness? I could ask myself: 'Why should it be this image that I am attentive to and not another?' Never, indeed, is a single image offered to me. If it should be an image which comes from my inner world, it is obvious that it exists there among others; if it should be an image coming from the outer world it is obvious that each part of the outside world brings with it an indefinite multitude of aspects. Why is it that a particular aspect is the one I am conscious of and not another?

All perception is perception of one aspect among a multitude

of possible aspects. All perception is a choice. Here is an example: I am walking in the street; my gaze, moving rapidly from one house to another, sweeps across a wall covered with posters; something happens in me which makes me alert and draws back my gaze to this wall. Then I notice on a poster a certain word and I feel that it is this word that alerted me, 'aroused my attention'. At the moment when my gaze was sweeping the wall I saw unconsciously all that was on the wall, but a choice was operative which led my consciousness to a single detail in this complex ensemble. I may hear someone speak the name of a person that I know and I think of this person; then some thought comes to me about him. Many ideas could have come to me, but a choice has operated among these ideas and it is only one of them that has attracted my attention and thus come into my consciousness.

Since there is a choice at the bottom of all my conscious perceptions, two questions are posed in me: 'Why is there a choice?' and 'Why should it be *this* choice in this particular case?'

The choice bears a relation to my 'will to experience', to my need to accomplish that judgment which we have seen is partial and qualitatively absolute. To the qualitatively absolute character of my 'experiencing' corresponds, first of all, the existence of choice, that is to say the singleness of my conscious mental image. We shall see later how the direction of the choice depends on the partiality of my 'experiencing'.

The 'will to experience' results in a qualitatively absolute judgment; we have seen it as a decree: 'This must be' or 'This must not be'. The absolute character of the decree presupposes the unity of the thing judged. Thus, in a court trial where the case is complex, several questions are put to the jury in a way that each categorical reply, 'Yes' or 'No', only applies to one aspect of the case. The fact that I judge *absolutely* obliges me to see that which I judge as an entity. Further, the conscious mental image of what I experience is always single. I may dissect it afterwards into several aspects of which each one will be envisaged separately as a single image, and this process is so rapid that I sometimes have the impression of perceiving several images at once, but in reality my consciousness is restricted to

only one single mental image corresponding to a single verbal expression. Let us suppose for example that two of my friends, Peter and John, who do not know each other, arrive together one day at my house. I am quite surprised to see them there. Diverse mental images have rapidly crossed my consciousness: I have first of all recognized separately Peter and John (the ideas that Peter is before me and that John is before me); then there was the idea that Peter and John are there together and finally the idea: 'It is surprising that Peter and John are there together'. At each moment no more than a single image occupied my consciousness. The idea 'simultaneity of the presence of Peter and John' included the ideas 'the presence of Peter' and 'the presence of John' and each of these ideas included the characteristic ideas which permitted me to identify my friends; but the possibility of thus dissecting the idea 'simultaneity of the presence of Peter and John' in no way prevents this idea from being a single idea. I am always attentive to only one mental idea at a time.

My 'will to experience', then, conditions the discriminative character of my attention; it conditions my conscious view of the world as 'multiple'. In reality the universe is one, a manifestation of a single cosmic energy which created all space without end. This manifestation of energy is heterogeneous, that is to say that it occurs according to definite stages, with different condensations, but this does not alter the fact that cosmic energy is one and that its manifestation is one. The wall covered with posters also participates in this universal unity and when my gaze swept over it I perceived, unconsciously and at one stroke, the totality of the wall in all its aspects. Then my discriminative attention brought into my consciousness a single word; this word, which is only a particular condensation of the single energy forming all the aspects of the wall, I perceived as an entity absolutely distinct, opposed to the rest of the wall. I can then observe other details of the same wall, seeing each of them as an entity. I can also consider the wall in its entirety and form the mental image: 'a wall covered with posters'. I then see this wall as opposed to all that which is not it. Yet whatever might be the aspect that I consciously perceive, I perceive it as an entity, abstracting from it all the other aspects of the world and opposing it to them. The

universe, as we have said, is not heterogeneous, but one; it is my 'will to experience' which makes me interpret the heterogeneity of the world as a multiplicity and this interpretation then gives birth to the illusion of the 'many' in me. The illusion of 'maya' is not the belief in the heterogeneity of the world which is manifested as a branch here, a river there, and so on; maya is the belief in multiplicity. In opposition to this illusion is the proclamation of Hui-neng: 'From the beginning not a thing is'.

Thus my conscious perception is always a choice because my 'will to experience', which is my will to judge in an absolute manner, conditions the discriminative activity of my attention. We must now see that the partial character of my 'experiencing' directs my perceptive choice. This can be easily understood from what we have established when studying 'experiencing': the 'will to experience' conditions the 'will to feel' and the 'will to feel' conditions the 'will to sense'.

The judgments contained in my memory, or in other words, the associations proper to my personal structure, direct the choice of my perceptions. The word which strikes me on the wall covered with posters, always indicates a person or a thing for which I have a particular affinity, either positive or negative. The faces which strike me in a crowd—the only ones that I see consciously—always interest me in a special way and belong to certain types to which I am sensitive. Before the same complex spectacle, different men perceive consciously different things; at the races, for instance, one type of man will see above all the horses while another will see, more than anything else, the pretty girls. If I read the same book at different periods of my life, I perceive different things because my personal structure has been rearranged between readings. At any moment I am more sensitive to certain images than to others because these images make me feel and experience more, either in the sense of my affirmation or in the sense of my negation.

Thus it is easy to see, in broad outline, how choice between the innumerable possible images is made by our attention, but we shall have to distinguish in ourselves two kinds of thought—real thought and imaginary thought — and this distinction, which will enable us to be specific about essential ideas on the

functioning of our minds, will, at the same time, show us the great complexity of this problem.

We shall do best by starting with that which can be expressed most simply and we shall see later that it is only approximate. There could be a time when I dream and I think about things which at the time are out of range of my sense organs. In my field of consciousness an imaginative film unfolds which I invent according to the state of my personal structure and which I will call an *imaginary* film, made up of imaginary perceptions. Another time I might go to the theatre. I observe the actors, their gestures, their words, through the activity of my sense organs; in my field of consciousness an imaginative film develops which is based more or less on the real, immediate world, a film which provisionally I shall call 'real', made up of real perceptions.

At first glance we are tempted to believe that the 'real' film is the one whose genesis is the most simple. It is not and so we shall study first of all the genesis of the imaginary film. I invent my imaginary film as a consequence of my claim for an experience which affirms my 'being-absolutely-in-so-far-as-I-am-distinct'. It owes to this origin its two essential characteristics: (1) That it projects me into the future (the claim) and (2) That it gives me a world centred around me.

(1) *My Imaginary Film Projects Me into the Future*

Sometimes this is perfectly evident: on receipt of good or bad news, I embellish the event; I imagine its consequences, either happy or unhappy, while amplifying them more and more. At another time it is less easy to see: my reverie evokes a scene from the past; or else I imagine an unlikely story of an event that is scarcely possible, which could then never be realized in the future. To say, however, that my reverie projects me into the future is not to say that it represents the future for me. It is not the thing imagined which projects me into the future, but imagination itself. This projection indeed derives from the will to experience; it is sustained by my desire to grasp in an image the consciousness of my 'being'. I reach out to grasp this consciousness which I have not got and which I attempt to acquire. It is in this way that my imagination, even when it represents the past or an impossible event, projects me into the future.

(2) *My Imaginary Film Constructs a World Centred On Me*

Here again it is not by virtue of its content that my imaginary film is centred on me; it could be that the story that I imagine does not concern myself either directly or indirectly. If my imaginary film is always centred on me, it is because it is invented as a function of my personal structure. I can say that it is this structure that invents it, that creates it, that is its first cause. My person is the centre of the imaginary film in the same way that the Absolute Principle is the centre of the universe. When my imaginary film concerns me its progress can affirm or deny me, its scenario can exalt or abase me. It seems strange at first that a film imagined in the hope of grasping the consciousness of my being can deny me, but we must understand the illusory danger that my imaginary film is bound to take into account. This danger is the vision of a world existing independently of me, a world which neither serves me nor threatens me, a world for which I do not exist. I am wounded at the source of my whole conscious psychic life because of the discrimination which apparently opposes my organism to the rest of the world, the discrimination from which comes the hypothetical character of my 'being'. The hypothesis that is fundamentally intolerable to me is not that of a world which oppresses me, because in oppressing me the world still considers me and as a result is conditioned by me. The intolerable hypothesis is that of a world which has no intention towards me, neither good nor bad, a world for which I do not exist. It is of little importance then, in one sense, whether or not I am abased in my reverie. It is absolutely important to me, on the other hand, that this reverie be created as a function of my personal structure and that it should thus constitute a world centred on me.

We can deal now with the imaginative film that we have called 'real', the film that unrolls in me when I go to see a play at the theatre. I am tempted at first to believe that this film does not project me into the future and that it is not centred on me. We shall show, however, that these two characteristics of the imaginary film are found here again; the imaginative film that unrolls in me through direct contact with the immediate outer world differs in no way, by its nature, from the imaginary film. In order to understand this it is necessary for us to study again our perception of present outer reality, by considering once more the example of the wall covered with posters on which I noticed a word. In the course of this incident there were two perceptions in me: the one unconscious, concerning the whole of the wall; the other conscious, concerning one single word. When my glance swept the wall my retina received impressions from the whole of this scene in all its details, subject to the limits of my visual acuity. All these aspects caught by my retina were transmitted to my brain, with a perfect impartiality, by my optic nerve, and my brain received them equally impartially. In other words I saw the whole of these aspects without being conscious of them, without seizing them. Then, from among this multitude of aspects offered, my attention chose one, grasped it, and thus rendered it conscious.

My unconscious perception of the whole of the wall is a truly real perception, faithfully modelled on the immediate outer world. We are not saying that it is in resonance with the totality of vibrations that emanate from the wall, but that it is a perception of all that is perceptible to my eye. The *reality* of the wall is not a quantitative question but a qualitative one. It consists in the structural identity of the image perceived and the outer object. This identity does exist here. Indeed, my unconscious perception of the wall brings with it an indefinite multitude of aspects partially and simultaneously perceived in a heterogeneous and global picture; it is a multitude of aspects both different and unified, not a multiplicity of aspects separate and opposed one to the other; that is to say that my unconscious and global image has the real structure of the universe, a structure which we have said is at the same time one and heterogeneous. My unconscious perception is truly real, it is a perception of the cosmic reality, one and heterogeneous.

We must notice, however, that this perception does not constitute a film. A mental film is a succession of homogeneous images, a succession of pictures bound together in a coherent way. I have a mental film if, for example, I observe in a conscious and analytical way a whole series of aspects of the wall; each aspect of the wall is grasped consciously and in a homogeneous

image and all these images are tied together in a coherent way by the general image 'wall-covered-with-posters'. My unconscious global perception of the wall, on the contrary, brings with it a multitude of aspects simultaneously, which are unified by a heterogeneous cohesion (a cohesion which manifests the underlying single reality). One could object in this way: 'When your glance moves, your unconscious global perception is modified at each moment; does not the succession of these perceptions constitute an unconscious real film?' No, because a film supposes an intelligible coherence, among the images, which gives them their unity; succession occurs only as a function of our memory, of our consciousness. My unconscious global images, since they are unconscious, escape my memory; they only exist in the moment and it is illusory to consider them as a succession. My unconscious global, real perception is always instantaneous and never constitutes a real mental film.

When I consciously notice a word on the wall, this perception is quite different from my unconscious real perception. It implies a choice made as a function of my personal structure. My unconscious perception does not project me into the future (since it is only in the moment and does not lend itself to being grasped in its global state); it is not centred on me (since it has the impartial cohesion of the cosmos of which the centre is at the same time everywhere and nowhere). My conscious perception of a word is, on the contrary, centred on me since it results from a choice made as a function of my personal structure, and it projects me into the future because it is the 'grasping' of a word, a gesture reaching out towards the expected consciousness of my 'being'. The conscious perception of the real present has the same nature as the perceptions of my reverie; it is just as imaginary. That my conscious perception might be grasped in my memory or in the immediate outer world comes to the same thing.

My conscious perception of the real world appears first in my instantaneous unconscious perception of the world; from among a multitude of aspects offered, my attention grasps one, isolates it and thus renders it conscious. This grasping, however, is a phenomenon which happens in time; however rapid it might be, it lasts for a fraction of a second. What my consciousness grasps is already in the past; the image grasped is already a memory.

One can see how consciousness creates the illusory impression of time, since that which is grasped is already in the past and the grasping projects us into the future.

In addition to these theoretical considerations, certain concrete facts lead us to the same conclusion. If my conscious perception of the real world were truly real, it would always be adequate to reality; in fact it often distorts reality. When my attention determines an aspect of the real world in my real unconscious perception, the image chosen, as a function of my personal structure, is more or less distorted as a consequence of this structure. The eye-witness accounts of several people who have been present at the same event often radically contradict each other; if I am obsessed by love for a particular woman I think I recognize this woman in others who scarcely resemble her; the preconceived notion that I have of an object can make me see in this object aspects which it does not possess. The following experiment demonstrates this well: pictures were taken of a film star in several very different scenes, in a scene of love, of hate, of fear, and so on. Then a close-up of the face in repose and with a neutral expression of the actor was taken. During the course of the showing, this close-up was inserted in the middle of the different scenes. At the time of the projection the spectators, not forewarned, saw clearly in the close-up expressions of love, hate, fear, according to the nature of the scene in which it appeared.

In spite of this, my conscious perception of present reality is more or less adequate to this reality, while my perception of reverie is quite inadequate to it. Therefore I can make a fairly legitimate division of my conscious perceptions between imaginary perceptions, stemming from my reserve of distant memories, and 'real' perceptions, immediate memories stemming from my unconscious perception of the present.

We return now to what we have improperly called my 'real' film, to this film which unrolls when I attend a play at the theatre. I can understand now that this film contains the two sorts of conscious perceptions. Certain of my mental images reproduce partially what is happening on the stage. Others are invented in me, either by association with the first kind (I compare, for example, a feeling expressed on the stage with an analogous feeling that I experience in my personal life), or else

quite independently (all of a sudden I think, for example, of a letter that I forgot to post). My imaginative film is comparable to a chain made up of two sorts of links, the ones that are real and the ones that are imaginary. The composition of this chain varies from one moment to another. When I dream all the links are imaginary. When I am attentive to the outer world the real links are interspersed among the imaginary, more or less numerously, according to whether the outer world interests me more or less, according to the affinities existing between the present circumstances and my personal structure.

This established, we can go further and see that there are, in reality, in the 'chain' of my conscious film, three sorts of links and not only two. Indeed, when I dream I can evoke a scenario which is probable or possible in a practical way; alternatively my scenario can be improbable, possible in a theoretical way (all that which is imaginable being theoretically possible), but impossible in a practical way. A small man, weak and awkward, for example, imagines a scene where he is in opposition to an athlete; he can imagine this scene realistically and see himself in flight or floored, but he could equally well imagine himself victorious. The links of the probable film are a little different from the links of the improbable film; they are imaginary since the scene imagined is not taking place, but they are 'real' in that they take reality into account. One could call them 'hybrids'. Whatever might be the nature of the imaginative film that unrolls in my consciousness, I can always discover there imaginary links and real links with hybrids interspersed.

This distinction of the three imaginative links is of interest to practical psychology (e.g. the distinction between extravert and introvert: the extravert has more 'real' links, the introvert has more imaginary links, probable or improbable), but from a theoretical point of view, which is much more important, we must remember that we are only dealing with degrees of imagination and that our conscious film is essentially imaginary, the recall of a past time that we project into the future. *Consciously I do not see present reality.* At each moment I have two thoughts: (1) an unconscious thought which is real, my unconscious global perception of present reality. This thought, which does not depend upon my 'will to experience', is instantaneous,

it is in the instant, it is thus intemporal; (2) a conscious thought, or imaginative film, which is imaginary thought, a temporal succession of images more or less removed from present reality; and this film is the result of a choice which depends upon my 'will to experience'.

One can see how fertile this notion of the 'will to experience' is; without it we should not be able to broach the problem of the birth of our thought; we should not be able to understand that our consciousness is a 'grasping', that it is a choice, and that it thus presupposes the existence of an unconscious thought, which alone is real, endowed with an indescribable richness and in which the choice is made.

We should now for a moment study the essential characteristics of the mysterious unconscious thought which is real and intemporal. It is situated between consciousness and the Unconscious Principle (the principle of all possible thoughts). We have seen what distinguishes it from consciousness and it is unnecessary to go over that again, but we must examine how it differs from the Unconscious Principle. The Unconscious Principle has under its command all that is conceivable; in that it is the source of all possible perceptions, it has the same extension as the cosmos; it is what Zen calls Original Mind, or Cosmic Mind, or No-Mind. My unconscious perception of present reality is, on the contrary, limited to the part of the universe whose vibrations reach my sense organs. It is a direct manifestation of the Unconscious Principle and it does not, therefore, differ from it qualitatively; but it only encloses a part of the cosmos and in that way differs from the Unconscious Principle or Cosmic Mind, which is the entire cosmos. It represents a partial and instantaneous *actualization* of the potentially unlimited contents of the Unconscious Principle. It is this actualized part of the Unconscious which is offered to the attention for the elaboration of the conscious film. The Unconscious Principle is comparable to a bank which contains all possible riches; unconscious thought represents a current account and conscious thought represents certain coins or cheques drawn against the current account. Unconscious thought—of which my conscious images of each moment constitute a fragment—can either be a present actualization of the Unconscious Principle (by contact with the present outside

world), or it can be a reactivation of a former actualization which has been preserved in my memory.

Whether my unconscious real thought be a present actualization of the Unconscious Principle or whether it be the reactivation of a former actualization, it generally results in both cases in a sensory contact, immediate or past, with the outer world. It is by the intermediary of the senses that the awakening of my unconscious thought is generally accomplished; but it can happen that the senses are *not* used, the mind entering into direct resonance with the outer world, and it is in this way that the perception called 'extra-sensory' is produced. Some person, for instance, in a particular state, speaks Chinese fluently although he does not 'know' the language. To explain this phenomenon we must see first of all what happens in me when I learn Chinese in the normal way. I put myself repeatedly in sensory contact with the Chinese language and this contact actualizes in me unconscious knowledge of Chinese from which my attention raises conscious images which accumulate in my memory. This supposes obviously that, in being the Unconscious Principle, I knew Chinese from all eternity, as I knew all things; my sensory preoccupation with Chinese has only actualized it, released this potential knowledge and offered it to the elaboration of the consciousness. I have not acquired a knowledge that I did not have, I have grasped a knowledge that I had, but which I had until then in a way which made it inaccessible. With the person who enjoys the 'gift of languages', the actualization of the potential knowledge of Chinese is produced without using the sense organs. The mind enters into resonance with the outside Chinese language in a direct, immediate way. Apart from this different modality of the phenomenon of resonance, what happens in this person is not essentially different from what happens in me when I learn Chinese in the usual way.

Many of the para-psychic powers (visions, premonitions, telepathy) result from this possibility of actualizing the Unconscious Principle, without the help of the sense organs. These phenomena imply the existence of vibrations more subtle than those which pass through the sense organs, vibrations which reach the brain directly. Thus X-rays, more subtle than light rays, pass through obstacles which stop light rays. The man who knows only his

conscious thoughts wonders about these powers, which seem 'miraculous' to him, but there is nothing to be astonished at when one understands the idea of the Unconscious Principle. In being the Unconscious Principle, I know all from all eternity; the conscious appearance of some image does not raise a problem of origin; the only problem which is raised concerns the way in which my 'intuitive knowledge' is transferred into my consciousness.

The real unconscious thought, the actualization of the Unconscious Principle, has been called 'subconscious'. Someone will say to me, for example: 'When your gaze swept the wall covered with posters, you saw all the details subconsciously'. This word 'subconscious' can be criticized, however, because its use here evokes a mass of separate images identical to the images which file past my conscious thought. Now my real unconscious thought, as we have said, is a multitude, not a multiplicity; it is not a thought analogous to conscious thought, underlying it, unfolding in an obscure time as conscious thought unfolds in a clear time. It has not the nature of conscious thought at all and in particular it has nothing to do with time. It has no duration, it is intemporal. It is on the frontiers of the Unconscious Principle and conscious thought, between the noumenon and the phenomenon, and it must not be identified with either. There is no 'subconscious' in us; in us the Unconscious Principle *is* and the consciousness *exists*. Real unconscious thought is a purely explicative idea which concerns the genesis of our conscious thought; from our present point of view it has no more existence than the instant; like the instant it cannot be grasped although our attention grasps from it all the material of our consciousness. Without duration, but always renewing, it is discontinuous by its instantaneousness and continuous by its constant renewal; as evanescent as the instant, it participates in eternity.

What we have just understood about our conscious thinking enables us to see that it does not differ from dreams that we have while sleeping. The dream is an imaginative film in which the links that we have called 'real' are necessarily lacking; the dream only embraces imaginary or hybrid links, probable or improbable images independent of the present outer world (sometimes, however, a real link *can* appear, when I dream that I dream). Never-

theless this absence of 'real' links only constitutes, in relation to the conscious waking film, a purely formal difference, not a difference in kind, since our so-called 'real' perceptions are only perceptions predetermined, according to the imaginary mode, in the most recent real unconscious perception; they are thus by nature imaginary. *Our conscious thinking has all the characteristics of a dream; it is a dream.* The representation that it gives us of the world is illusory, because it represents to us a world exclusively centred on ourselves, whereas the centre of the world, in reality, is at the same time everywhere and nowhere. We should remember that 'illusory' does not mean non-existent or valueless. Since the centre of the world is everywhere, it is also in me. The vision of the world centred on me is not completely unreal, but its reality is relative, since it excludes the possibility of the world being centred on something other than me. Also we cannot just call it real, absolutely real. In relation to Absolute Reality, which being my Principle is my true Self, my conscious thinking, whether I dream or am awake, is illusory. In the film of my conscious thinking one can distinguish images which are its constituent elements, and the method of evoking and associating these images. The images come from the reality with which I have been in contact since the beginning of my life, but the way of evoking and associating the images comes from my 'will to experience'. At each moment the play of my 'will to experience' conditions the functioning of my conscious thinking. *Thus, in so far as it is active, my 'will to experience' is the will to think that the world is centred on me.*

If my consciousness of 'being' varies in inverse ratio to my consciousness of existing, it is because my consciousness of existing *in the world* exposes me to the intolerable vision of a world which has no need of my existence, which does not necessarily imply my existence and of which I am not the first cause or the centre. The more feeble is my consciousness of existing, the more feeble also is this risk, and the more I am therefore reassured about my hypothetical 'being-absolutely-in-so-far-as-I-am-distinct'. My wish to obtain the consciousness of my 'being' is expressed by the liking that I have for organic euphoria, be it of somatic or psychic origin, because this euphoria is a diminution of my consciousness of existing (the more well I am, the less I feel myself), but above all it is expressed by the elaboration of my imaginary conscious thinking in so far as my consciousness of existing remains; since my consciousness of existing remains, and since therefore the risk of seeing the world unconditioned by me persists, I must make it more acceptable by means of my conscious film, which necessarily elaborates—being a personal choice—a representation of the world centred on me. We can better understand now the difference which exists between my *theoretical* will to experience and my *practical* will to experience. Theoretically I want to experience the consciousness of my 'being', thanks to the destruction of my consciousness of existing, in the perfect attainment of euphoria which is called 'happiness'. Theoretically, I seek 'happiness', but this search, in the course of which so many obstacles arise, implies an expectation. In place of consenting to this expectation I am irresistibly attracted to the use of my imagination, a kind of miraculous short-cut which seems to procure for me immediately just what I need, this vision of a world centred on me, a world that I condition. The play of my *compensatory* imagination substitutes for my theoretical search for happiness a real immobility in my present 'state'. I wish to experience the relation with the world in which I am in the process of experiencing, in a representation which centres this world on me. Thus is explained the fact that I wish to experience what I am in the process of experiencing, constructing for myself, through that, an imaginary life of agitation on the spot which is opposed to a real evolutionary life. My 'will to experience' engenders in me a constant resistance to my *normal* evolution towards satori.

We shall end this chapter by saying a few words about the concentration and dispersal of thinking and we shall show that we must distinguish between a positive concentration and a negative concentration.

My 'will to experience', in so far as it really acts, is a will to think of the world as centred on me. This will is qualitatively absolute, that is to say it is not ambivalent; I have not at the same time the will to think of the world as centred on me and as not centred on me, but though this will is qualitatively absolute, the intensity of its activity is relative and variable. From one moment to the next the need to think of the world as centred on

me is not equally intense. These variations of intensity in the activity of my 'will to experience' depend on the degree of acuteness of my inner 'trial', that is to say on the degree of acuteness of my doubt about my 'being-absolutely-in-so-far-as-I-am-distinct', but the more clear-cut my trial, the more I wish to experience and the more I wish to think of the world as centred on me. The degree of acuteness of the trial depends, on the one hand, on my innate constitution and, on the other hand, on the past and present circumstances of my life; the stronger my affirmations and my negations have been, the more sensitive I am to all new affirmations and negations, that is to say the more acute is my trial.

We can see the consequences of this as they affect my concentration in thinking. My conscious thinking, a representation of the world centred on me, since it is elaborated by me in terms of my personal structure, has always a certain 'circular' structure (agitation on the spot). The 'thread' of my thinking is not stretched out in a straight or undulating line, it winds itself into a ball. At each moment my images gravitate around a central image, as planets gravitate around a star, but during a given period of time I can either think of a number of things, and the 'balls' of my thinking are then numerous and small, or else I can think all the time of the same thing, and my thinking then forms a single, large ball. My conscious thinking is always 'concentrated' (made into balls), but it is so to a greater or lesser degree. My concentration can be very great when I have, for example, an *idée fixe* around which the satellite images gravitate constantly; it can be very feeble when my reverie runs rapidly from one subject to another; one speaks then of the *dispersion* of thinking (a dispersion which is, in reality, a multiplicity of little concentrations).

The more acute my inner trial, at a given moment, the more concentrated is my thinking; the idea which at this moment is a witness for the defence or for the prosecution in the trial, retains the satellite images in its field of gravity; the more acute the trial, the more important is the witness; that is to say that the question of which I then think interests me strongly. The more a question interests me, the more it concentrates my thinking. If, on the other hand, my trial is calm, each witness is of little interest; each subject of which I think retains the satellite images for a short time and is quickly replaced by another.

It is obvious that the more concentrated my thinking on a certain question, the more difficult it is for me to concentrate on another question. A man, for example, is subject to grave anxiety and all his ideas turn around the central idea of his anxiety. This man, if he wants to concentrate on some work which has nothing to do with his anxiety, does so badly or not at all. He then says: 'I cannot concentrate; I lack concentration'. In reality he does not lack concentration at all; he is even in a state of great concentration; but he cannot concentrate on something other than that on which he is concentrating. We must not confuse distraction and dispersion; the man who is concentrated on a question is at the same time distracted from all the rest; but he is not dispersed.

I cannot understand the problem of the concentration of thought, in all its aspects, if I have not seen that concentration can be positive or negative, according to the way in which I view my 'trial'. If my life has been, on the whole, more affirming than denying, my process is activated in a positive and optimistic way; it is a trial of rehabilitation. Greed for existence dominates in me. In these conditions, when a new circumstance arrives as witness for the defence or prosecution in this positive trial, I throw myself into the activity of the trial, my consciousness clearly grasps the witness, and all sorts of conscious images gravitate clearly around it. If on the contrary my life has been, on the whole, seriously denying, my trial is activated in a negative and pessimistic way; I envisage my eventual condemnation. Fear of existence predominates in me; my trial interests me, but negatively, in an attitude of repulsion and aversion. Under these conditions, when a new circumstance arrives as witness for the defence or prosecution, I withdraw from the activity of the trial in a negative concentration of thinking. The central idea and all the satellite images which gravitate intensely around it are blurred and vague; there are great eddies in my consciousness, but without precise contours, without clear lines. I then have the impression of thoughts being 'blank'. The man in whom this phenomenon occurs also tells himself that he lacks concentration, but this too is incorrect; he is strongly concentrated, but

without being able to grasp clearly the images of this concentration. He is distracted from all that does not occupy him and he does not know what it is that does occupy him. Certain neurotics who know this state say that they think of nothing; in reality they think of a whole host of things, but they do not know what they are.

These two sorts of concentration, positive and negative, can be seen in the same man because the same man has been able to be more affirmed than denied in one particular field and more denied than affirmed in another. I can, for example, have a concentration which is rich in detail in the face of an intellectual difficulty and a 'blank' concentration of mental void before some difficulty of a practical nature; or it could be the other way round.

CHAPTER 6

CONSCIOUS AND IMPARTIAL THOUGHT

Everything that has been said in the preceding chapters has concerned me from the angle of my particular relation with a particular outer world. From this limited point of view I have clearly distinguished in me two types of thinking: on the one hand is my *unconscious* thinking, which is real and impartial and is actualized as a function of my universal structure; on the other hand is my *conscious* thinking, which is imaginary and partial and elaborated as a function of my personal structure.

All this can apply to animals as well as to man, but man has a privilege: he can form general mental images and not just particular images. In order to understand this 'particular-general' distinction we must eliminate first of all a source of error by saying a few words about another distinction, that of 'concrete-abstract'. The 'concrete-abstract' distinction corresponds to the distinction between a 'material aspect' and a 'subtle aspect' of Manifestation. The notion 'table' is concrete; the notion 'gratitude' is abstract. The notion 'table' is a direct result of sensory perceptions, that is to say of the function of my material aspect or my soma. The notion 'gratitude' only results indirectly from sensory perceptions. I perceive with my senses words and actions expressing gratitude, but it is by an intellectual induction that I arrive at the notion of gratitude; this notion depends on my subtle aspect, on my psyche.

The 'particular-general' distinction is different. The 'table' and 'gratitude' can both be thought of either from the particular angle or from the general angle. I can form the mental image of some particular table or the mental image of 'table' in general. In the same way I can form the mental image of the particular gratitude of some person towards some other person, or the mental image of 'gratitude' in general. This distinction has no relation to the gross or subtle aspects of Manifestation; it does not concern Manifestation in itself, but the mental representation

that I have of it. It does not concern the outer world in itself, but the inner representation that I have of it.

The 'particular-general' distinction must really be understood as being inner and not outer. I am indeed tempted to believe, when I think of my personal table, that this is a particular mental image, and when I think of the notion 'some table or other', that this is a general mental image. *In reality, as we shall see, the true difference between a particular image and a general image is that the first is sensory, the second verbal.*

Suppose that I evoke in my consciousness the visual image of my table; it is obviously possible that the word 'table' might appear at the same time in my thinking, but this is not necessary; I can visualize my table without any words. In the same way there can appear in my consciousness the auditory image of the flute and the olfactory image of the perfume of the violet independently of the words 'flute' and 'violet'.

Suppose now that, wanting to sell my table, I am bargaining energetically with an antiquarian. The word 'table' often comes to my lips; I perceive this word at each of its appearances; but in order to do that I do not necessarily perceive the visual image of my table. I perceive, through my senses, the outer and inner attitudes of my interlocutor, but not my table. I only perceive a purely verbal image of my table. When I visually evoke my table I have a particular image of it; I have a general image of it when I speak of it without visualizing it. This 'general' image of my table is so simplified that it is comparable to a geometric point without dimension. It represents its object *sub specie aeternitatis*. During the course of this discussion my table is not my consideration, but only the terms of the sale. Since I do not *consider* my table, although I speak of it, the purely verbal image that I have of it is not a particular representation distinct from that which is not it, but a *general* representation belonging to the generality of all that I am not considering.

The true difference between a particular image and a general image is not, let us repeat, that the first represents 'such and such a table' and the second 'some table or other'; it is that the first is a sensory image (of a specific table or of any table whatever), while the second is a verbal image (of a specific table or of any table whatever).

Then what is this verbal or general image thus distinguished from the particular or sensory image? Has not the 'word' any sensory foundation? It certainly has; I can perceive it as a sound (when I hear it), as a visual image (when I read it), as a muscular sensation (when I speak it). In fact, the verbal image is a sensory image. But if I distinguish the verbal image of the table from its sensory image, it is because the sensory perceptions that come to me of the word 'table' have nothing in common with those which come to me from the table itself. The association established between the sensory perceptions inherent in the word 'table' and those inherent in the table itself is an entirely conventional association. Thus can I say that the verbal image, although sensory in itself, is not sensory in relation to the object that the word designates. Verbal images are thus clearly distinct from direct, non-conventional, sensory images. With the convention which forms the basis of language we enter the *intellectual* domain.

Animals do not have language and they have no intellect. They have an unconscious thinking and a conscious, sensory thinking; they are capable of associating sensory images (for example, the dog associates the visual image of the whip with the tactile image of its use). Thus they have an *intelligence*, an imagination, but they have no *intellect* because they do not conventionally associate the sensory images which emanate from an object with the quite different sensory images which emanate from a 'word'. Many animals produce sounds which express their state: the amorous miaouwing of the cat differs from the miaouwing by which the cat asks that the door should be opened. But these sounds express desires, tendencies; that is to say that they express inner phenomena. They do not designate an outer object; they are not a language. It is interesting to observe that certain human words also express an inner state while at the same time they designate an outer object: the word 'rage', above all if I pronounce it with several 'r's', lends itself to the expression of a felt rage; the words 'gentleness' and 'charm' express corresponding states, but this only shows that the sounds of human words sometimes have, like the sounds produced by animals, a subjective significance. The essential character of the word lies in its objective significance which is purely intellectual

and is based on a conventional association between some object and some sound articulated by the human voice.

Once the distinction between sensory images and verbal images is established, I see that I have modalities of conscious thinking: a sensory thinking, made up of sensory images and a verbal thinking made up of verbal images. These two ways of thinking are associated in their activity; some words come to me in the middle of sensory images and vice versa, but I can have sensory thinking during a period of time without using any words. On the other hand, I cannot think intellectually, that is to say that I cannot do logical and mental operations, without using words.

We have just identified 'thinking intellectually' with 'doing mental and logical operations'. There in fact is the usefulness of language. Sensory perceptions are qualitatively different from one another and. for that reason, lend themselves only to simple associations, but words are special images which are all brought into being by the same convention and are therefore all of the same conventional nature. Therefore words can be manipulated easily where sensory images cannot. They lend themselves to complex combinations analogous to algebraic operations. Faced with a man who has just died, I do not need language to associate the state in which this man was while alive and the state in which I see him now; a dog can have a sensory image of the death of his master. But in order to pass from thoughts concerning the death of particular men to the thought 'all men are mortal', then from there to the thought 'I am mortal', it is necessary for me to do logical operations which presuppose the use of language.

We must return now to the 'will to experience' which is the central notion of all these studies and see how this will is tied to the two sorts of conscious thinking that we have just distinguished: sensory thinking and intellectual thinking. I think sensorily of an object when my 'will to experience' is activated in relation to it. I *think intellectually of an object when I think of it without my 'will to experience' being activated in relation to it.* This should not surprise us if we remember the relation existing between 'feeling' and 'experiencing'; there could not be 'experiencing' in relation to an object without a sensory

perception of this object and there could not be the will to have a sensory perception of an object without the will to experience it. The word is a sensory perception independent of our ability to sense the object named. In so far as I verbally think of an object I do not evoke its sensory perception and in consequence I have no experience in relation to it. It certainly happens that I verbally think of an object and evoke it sensorily immediately afterwards and then experience in relation to it; but the succession of the two perceptions, however rapid it may be, is none the less a succession. It happens at other times that first of all I have a sensory perception of an object, and then I formulate its name. In the moments which follow I think of the object in a sensory way and in a verbal way at the same time; but these two perceptions, although coexisting, nevertheless remain distinct and, to the degree in which I think verbally, I experience less in relation to the object itself and more in relation to feeling associated with the word. Here is an example: I hear a piece of music and I do not recognize who composed it; I experience in a certain way in relation to this music; then someone tells me: 'It is such and such a work of such and such a composer'. From the moment when this verbal designation exists in my consciousness, I notice that I do not experience in the same way; I can experience with as much intensity, but my 'experiencing' has lost its freshness, its spontaneity; to the degree in which I think the words which designate this music, I am to an extent cut off from its sensory perception.

Since intellectual thinking brings with it a suspension of the will to experience, I am tempted to think first of all that it is impartial; but if my 'will to experience' is suspended in relation to the object that I am in the process of thinking about intellectually (the object that I am naming), it continues to act in relation to other things. We shall show that intellectual thinking is impartial by its nature and that it can play a part in an impartial intention, but that most often, although impartial by its nature, it acts partially under the direction of the 'will to experience'.

Mr X, already harassed by financial worries, discovers a letter which proves that his wife is unfaithful. A torrent of sensory images is unleashed in his consciousness; he sees his wife in the

arms of another, he sees the hypocritical smiles at the house and so on. Then all of a sudden these words come to him: 'I am a betrayed husband'. This intellectual thinking, since it is verbal, presupposes a brief suspension of his 'experiencing', time enough to establish a logical relation in the chaos of his sensory perceptions. But the 'experiencing' is taken up again, aggravated by all the sensory perceptions associated with the verbal image 'betrayed husband'. Before the appearance of this phrase Mr X only envisaged the question from within the conjugal relation; now he envisages it beyond this, from the wider angle of social opinion. Then other sensory thoughts appear in the consciousness of this man which recall to him his financial worries and complicate still more his imaginative film. Then the following words are pronounced in him: 'That is the last straw. Now I have all the bad luck.' This intellectual thinking equally supposes a suspension of 'experiencing'. Then the 'experiencing' is taken up again, aggravated by all the sensory associations with the intellectual image 'persecuted by destiny'.

We can see from this example how intellectual thought, which is impartial by its nature, cannot be so in its function. During the course of the two brief suspensions of his 'experiencing' Mr X thought impartially. The sentence, 'I am a betrayed husband', is based on the following logical reasoning: 'A man whose wife is unfaithful is what people call a betrayed husband; now my wife is unfaithful to me; therefore I am, in the eyes of people, a betrayed husband'. This syllogism is impartial; it does not depend on the personal structure of Mr X; it is universal. But why has Mr X made this syllogism? This reasoning has come to him at a moment when his will to experience is acting in full force; and this brief intellectual episode was immediately followed by a reinforcing of his 'experiencing'. That is to say that the reasoning was released and utilized by the 'will to experience'; in other words, the 'will to experience', although in itself it might not be the mechanism of the intellectual operation (we shall speak later on about this mechanism), has nevertheless operated this mechanism for its own ends.

Suppose that Mr X, after a certain period of mental and emotional confusion and of anxious agitation, wishes to calm his anguish. He wants to see the actual circumstances of his life in

a less frightening way; he wants to discover remedies for his unhappiness which would bring him hope. More constructive intellectual operations are carried on in his consciousness. He thinks over his situation and he discovers certain considerations which diminish its seriousness; he thinks of some actions which can bring back prosperity to his affairs and recover for himself the exclusive love of his wife, or actions which can avenge him against his rivals in these two spheres. Although these reasonings might be more constructive in their direction, they do not differ essentially from the brief intellectual episodes of the first phase. They are still conditioned by the 'will to experience'. Mr X reflects intellectually in order to experience in a less painful way, but still in order to experience. In this case the intellectual thinking, although impartial by its very nature, does not act impartially; in its activity it is partial.

Now suppose that Mr X, turning his attention away from his financial and emotional difficulties, interests himself in the phenomena which have just been produced in him *as a result* of his difficulties. He no longer wishes to modify his state, but to understand it; he wishes to understand himself. Intellectual operations of a new modality are then produced. In the course of these operations Mr X thinks about his difficulties, but as his goal is no longer to remedy them, he no longer envisages them as *being* in their particularity. He envisages them as existing only in a contingent and general way; endowed now with relative reality, his difficulties are no longer, for Mr X, 'that which is in question'.

The intention which moves the intellectual thinking of our subject is no longer a 'will to experience' whatever might be, but a wish to discover the laws of his own psychosomatic mechanism. It is pure intellectual thinking, impartial not only in its nature, but also in its intention.

What essentially characterizes this thinking, impartial-in-its-intention, is not that it results from the wish to understand, because I can make myself understand in order to modify the state outside or inside myself—often I seek laws in order to modify things, that is to say, after all, in order to experience—*what essentially characterizes this impartial thinking is that it is the result of the wish simply to understand, to understand for*

the sake of understanding, to understand theoretically without any practical goal.

In the preceding chapter we distinguished two sorts of thinking: real, unconscious thinking and conscious, imaginary thinking. We can now go further in our analysis and draw up the following table:

(1) Real, unconscious thinking

(2) Conscious, imaginary thinking

  (*a*) Conscious, sensory thinking

  (*b*) Conscious, intellectual thinking

    (*i*) Partial intention

    (*ii*) Impartial intention.

Real, unconscious thinking has for its motive power the Cosmic Will, the will of the Absolute Principle, in so far as it is manifest by creating me.

Conscious, sensory thinking and intellectual thinking with partial intention have for motive power my 'will to experience'.

Intellectual thinking with impartial intention has for motive power my will simply to understand.

We must now examine this 'will simply to understand' that we have just encountered. In what way does it differ from the 'will to experience'? In what way do these two wills resemble each other beneath their difference? My 'will to experience' is a will to realize my being-absolutely-in-so-far-as-I-am-distinct; that is to say that it is a will to experience my particular structure, in my identification with a particularized universe centred around my organism; it is, as a consequence, a will to know the universe and myself in the hypothesis in which we mutually condition each other. My will simply to understand does not discriminate between the universe and myself; it is the will to know the universe (myself included) in the laws of its auto-conditioning; it is a will to think about the universe such as it is without localizing its centre; also it is the will to realize my universal structure, my non-distinct universal structure in my identity with all that exists.

What connects these two wills is that they are both wills to realize myself: my 'will to experience' is my will to realize myself in being a particular individual; my will simply to understand is a will to realize myself in being 'primordial man', identical with every other man. The will simply to understand is *disinterested* in the ordinary sense of the term; that does not mean to say that I am not interested in simply understanding, nor that a personal advantage does not result from it, but it does mean to say that I am not interested in simply understanding in terms of my personal structure and that the personal advantage which can come from it is not the goal of this will.

The will simply to understand is proper to the human being; it does not exist among animals. It implies, in fact, the activity of a function that the animal does not possess: the intellectual function, the function which permits the possibility of associating, in a conventional way, the sensory image of an object, whether concrete or abstract, with a sensory verbal image, the 'word'. Without the word, a mind can only form, between sensory images, simple causal associations which result in the discovery of particular laws; thanks to the word, a mind can form general images, qualitatively identical, and accomplish with these images complex logical operations which end in the discovery of general laws.

The distinction that we are trying to establish at the moment between a 'will to experience' and a will simply to understand is very important, but it is a very fine point. It will be seen later on that these two wills, although distinct, are intimately connected in their activity; it is therefore very understandable that philosophical systems have in general failed to conceive this distinction. It will be seen, on the other hand, that a certain antagonism exists between these two wills. The human mind, which has the profound intuition of the unity of the Absolute Principle, primary motivating power of all things, finds it repugnant to see two opposed motivating powers acting at the origin of its functioning. It wishes to grasp the Principle in a form; so the two wills of which we are speaking seem to the human mind to be alternatives between which it must choose by eliminating one of them.

Some completely reject the will simply to understand. This thinking, stripped of personal goals, strikes them as Utopian. Their attitude is: 'We are not pure spirits; each of us always thinks in view of a strictly personal advantage'. According to

this attitude it is postulated that man only has a will which is the result of his desires. Man is then simply a machine made up of conditioned reflexes, conditioned by the outside world (heredity and circumstances of life).

Others reject the 'will to experience'. This completely self-interested way of thinking shocks them because it is unaesthetic and limiting, but they do not come to the notion of the 'will simply to understand'; they distinguish 'instincts' and 'will' and do not qualify will in any way. In this distinction the idea of 'will' is a very confused and artificial notion; it is conceived as being neither affective nature nor intellectual nature, but as a force apart, of an unspecified nature, capable of directly influencing the behaviour of man.

In each of these two philosophical attitudes man believes himself to be controlled by a single motive power: either it is affectivity, nature leading man through the medium of his desires, or else it is unspecified 'will', which is not qualified in any way, acting on the 'instincts' which are conceived as simple forces of inertia. In these two attitudes man has failed to recognize the 'will simply to understand', an intellectual will, distinct from the affective will or 'will to experience'; if he identifies what he calls his 'intellectual curiosity' he assimilates it in his instincts and scarcely dreams of seeing in it any will whatever. Spinoza came across the notion of the will to understand when he wrote: 'Will and understanding are one and the same thing'; but it seems that the spiritually-minded Spinoza does not recognize the equality that exists with regard to the intemporal realization of man, between this intellectual will and affective will. The 'will to experience' belongs to the feminine component of the human being; the 'will simply to understand' belongs to the virile component. Before Satori they function alternately in a disjointed way; intemporal realization alone can unite them.

We have said that if it is possible for me to think simply in order to understand, it must often happen that I seek to understand in order to 'experience' in a partial way; although I can make use of my intellectual language towards an impartial goal, I most often direct it towards a partial goal. How is it that my intellect sometimes obeys my 'will simply to understand' and sometimes my 'will to experience'? Everything happens in me

as though there existed, between my affectivity and my intellect, a 'clutch' analogous to that in a car. When my affectivity is 'in gear' with my intellect, I think intellectually under the influence of my 'will to experience'; I then modify my representation of things (rationalisation) in such a way that I see the world centred on me; I seek a way to modify things outside me or in me; that is to say that I look for a way to reform the outer world or my own tendencies, in order to adapt them to some model which pleases me. On the other hand, when my intellect is 'declutched' from my affectivity, I think intellectually under the influence of my will simply to understand.

My 'declutched' intellectual thinking is *pure* intellectual thinking; when it is in gear my intellectual thinking is *impure*. It is necessary to understand these words well: impurity does not signify unworthiness; impurity signifies a mixture identifying two things which in reality are distinct. Although intellectual thinking in gear is 'impure', this is not because the affectivity which then controls it is itself impure, but because this association constitutes a disordered mixture. Sensory thinking which is purely affective is pure; 'declutched' intellectual thinking, solely intellectual, is pure; the only impure thinking is intellectual thinking transformed by affectivity.

My 'will to experience' commands the activity of my intellect through the medium of the 'clutch'; my 'will simply to understand', on the contrary, commands the activity of my intellect directly when the affective clutch is disengaged. This shows that my two wills command my intellect in very different ways. My 'will to experience' represents a force which is constantly exerted, even when its activity is not manifested; it continually tends to move my intellect by throwing itself into gear with it. My 'will simply to understand' must, on the other hand, take my 'will to experience' into account in order to act, and its activity is temporary. The comparison with the clutch of a car can come in useful here. When I do not touch the pedal, the engine is in gear with the wheels; a spring constantly keeps it so. In order to declutch I must make an effort which takes into account the strength of the spring; during this time the spring still exerts its power, a power which is manifested again as soon as my foot releases its pressure. Here is another comparison: the ashtray in

front of me remains resting on my desk through the force of its weight, a force which is constantly being exerted; it only rises above my desk when I take hold of it and overcome its weight with a temporary effort.

My 'will to experience' is analogous to the weight; the force that it represents is continually being exerted; it is 'natural'. My pure intellectual will represents a force which is only exerted periodically. It appears spontaneously in me at an advanced stage in my growth and it constitutes the apogee of my growth. But 'spontaneous' is not synonymous with 'natural'. This particular force in man must not be called 'natural', but 'super-natural'. We shall explain why this is so.

Universal creation is based on the metaphysical triad: two lower principles, Yin and Yang, are balanced by a conciliating principle which surmounts them, the Tao. But the conciliating principle appears to me under two different forms, according to whether I envisage the universe as an ensemble of particular forms or simply as a whole, whether I see it as a multitude of individualities or as a whole. If I envisage the universe as an ensemble of particular personal creatures, the conciliating principle also appears to me as personal; it is then what was formerly called the demiurge and what we, today, call 'Nature'. If I envisage the universe as a whole, the conciliating principle appears to me as impersonal, as Supreme Principle, or the metaphysical Absolute. What I have just said of the macrocosm is valid for my microcosm. As personal man I am created by Nature; as universal or primordial man I am created directly by the Supreme Principle, of which Nature represents a sort of lower delegate. My 'will to experience', a will to realize myself in so far as I am particular man, emanates from Nature; its force is a natural particular force. My pure intellectual will, a will to realize myself in so far as I am universal man, emanates directly from the Supreme Principle; its force is not a natural force, but it is not against nature either because the distinction that I make between Nature and the Supreme Principle is only inherent in my mind and does not imply any opposition between these two terms; I will therefore call it 'super-natural'.

It might be surprising to read that this 'super-natural' motive power which activates my pure intellect only acts temporarily,

while the natural force which activates my intellectual thi is constantly exerted. Is this 'super-natural' force, then, in to the natural force, since it seems powerless to sustain itself? To answer this question it is necessary for me to distinguish between principle and manifestation in my pure intellectual will; its principle is permanent and infinite, but its manifestation depends on a function belonging to my finite organism; it is this pure intellectual function which, as opposed to my other functions, acts temporarily.

The 'super-natural' character of the intellectual possibility explains its immense power over natural life. Utilized by the pure intellectual will, this possibility allows the fulfilment of the temporal realization of man in a realization which is intemporal. When it is taken over, on the other hand, by the 'will to experience', it disturbs the simple temporal realization. This possibility, which confers on man a potentially infinite superiority over the animal, exposes him at the same time to a life infinitely inferior to that of the animal.

If it is Nature that constantly activates my 'will to experience', what is it that conditions the temporary play of my pure intellectual will? The efficient cause of this will is none other than the Supreme Principle, but what is it that causes the release of its activity? Why does it go into action at a particular moment by declutching the affectivity? It is put into action, as we have said, by my pure intellectual function; what is it then that conditions the activity of this function? We should notice first of all that the activation of this function will have a chance of taking place in proportion to the development of the cerebral instrument that is essential to its activity; and this development depends on two factors, one innate factor and one acquired factor. The gift of thinking intellectually with impartial intention is similar to all other gifts; we have it, more or less, from birth and it develops later, more or less, through exercise.

But if I envisage myself as a given man in whom pure intellectual thinking has a given development, how is the activity of this pure intellectual thinking released? This activity is released through the failure of my 'will to experience'; that is to say that it is released at the moment when my will to see the world as centred on me is shown to be insufficient to sustain itself

completely in face of the intolerable image of a world independent of me. My pure intellectual thinking is released when I am insufficiently 'compensated' by my partial thinking, either when my compensations are not yet established or when they are not sufficiently effective.

The young child who begins to speak, if he is gifted with a good pure intellectual function, asks his parents innumerable 'whys'. At this stage his compensatory relations with an outside world which he is in the process of discovering are not yet constructed; thus he fails to represent the world completely to himself as centred on him; his inner world is insufficiently constructed for him to be able to integrate within it all that he perceives. Consequently he manifests vividly his 'will simply to understand', his avidity for ideas which cannot bring him any immediate personal advantage. Later on his compensations are established; he has elaborated, under the influence of his 'will to experience', a certain number of 'considerations' of the world which represent it as centred on him. But these imaginative fictions sometimes break down under the strain that is imposed upon them by hard reality; they break down at moments when the indifference of the outside world towards him is too obvious for him to be able to integrate the reality in his inner egocentric world. These moments are often painful, and this is why it has been maintained that pure thought is awakened by suffering.

In reality the failure of the 'will to experience' does not consist essentially in suffering; the anguish which results in suicide is accompanied by my seeing the world as remorselessly bearing me down, but completely centred on me. The failure of my 'will to experience' consists essentially in the fact that my deceiving imaginative faculty reaches its limits and that, as a consequence, my imaginative film does not quite succeed in deceiving me. But if at a given moment my imaginative film does not quite succeed in deceiving me, it is because of the strength of the potential of pure intellect, endowing me with a lucidity which rebels against a lie that has become too great for it to tolerate. The activity of my pure thought is released because of the insufficiency of my partial thinking, but the cause of this insufficiency of my partial thinking lies in my pure intellectual possibility itself. The failure

of my lie conditions the manifestation of my lucidity, but it is conditioned by my lucidity in its turn.

Thus we can understand the auto-conditioning of my pure intellectual thinking. The outer world only conditions the practical efficacy of pure intellectual activity, and this is done in two ways: first, by circumstances in which the meeting with reality lands my partial thinking in difficulties; and second, by contact with an esoteric teaching, because universal truths, although pre-existent in me in a latent manner, must be awakened by intellectual formulations either written or oral.

Having thus 'established' our pure intellectual thinking in our general functioning, we must return for a moment to intellectual thinking as seen in its wholeness and ask ourselves what characterizes the images that it makes. Whence come the mental, intellectual images which complete a logical operation?

When distinguishing unconscious thinking and conscious thinking, we said that the first was 'real' and the second 'imaginary'. We must now determine in conscious thinking a very special kind of image, the logical or pure intellectual image of the mind, and realize that it should not be called 'imaginary'. The conscious images that we have called 'imaginary' deserved this qualification because they were elaborated in order to represent the world as centred on me; that is to say that they were elaborated in an illusory perspective in which my organism was an entity opposed to the rest of the universe. But my logical intellectual images are elaborated in order to represent the universe just as it really is, not centred on me, embracing my organism instead of being opposed to it. They no longer come from my personal structure, but from my universal structure; that is to say that they only come from me in so far as I am the whole cosmos, without the illusory opposition 'Self—Not-Self'. They are what Plato calls 'Ideas', intellectual images directly manifesting Cosmic Reality, without the intermediary of Nature which creates me in so far as I am distinct. They should not be called 'imaginary', but 'real'.

My various ways of thinking are therefore arranged with a certain symmetry; on one side is my unconscious thinking which is 'real'; on the other side is my intellectual thinking which has an impartial intention and which is also 'real'; between the two is my partial, conscious thinking which is 'imaginary'. Of my

two 'real' ways of thinking, one lies in the depths of my mind, the other is the central point of my surface consciousness. Both ought to be called 'real' because they are real in essence since they manifest Cosmic Reality directly in my mind. But in order to understand in what way these two differ we must return to the distinction between substance and form. My unconscious thinking is pure substance, the substantial manifestation of the Cosmic Mind. My impartial intellectual thinking is pure form, formal manifestation of the Cosmic Mind. Each of these ways of thinking is pure and non-dualistic; but together they form a dualism at present not conciliated and whose conciliation will be my intemporal realization.

My impartial intellectual thinking, like my unconscious thinking, is instantaneous; it is only in the instant that I perceive in a universal way. But when this thinking is expressed in sentences it lives in my memory; that is to say that from then on it belongs to my personal structure. In other words my intellectual thinking, of impartial intention, springing up in the instant without a personal aim, could not be impartial when it is used. My logical conclusion is attained in a mental movement which has a universal nature; but, as soon as it is formulated, it awakens my 'sensing', my 'feeling' and my 'experiencing'. The word, from the time it is pronounced, is similar to an outer object and brings to life a whole context of affective movements. Although a pure idea at its birth, my intellectual discovery immediately becomes impure by association with my affectivity. What comes from my 'will simply to understand' is grasped and utilized by my 'will to experience'; the 'will simply to understand' is antagonistic to the 'will to experience', but the functioning of the 'will simply to understand' does not constitute the antidote that we are seeking in order to balance the functioning of our 'will to experience'; it is an important landmark on the way, but it is not the end of the journey.

PART TWO

CHAPTER 7

THE THREE COSMIC PLANES

In the preceding chapters we have considered the problem of our condition mostly from a phenomenological point of view. We have in this way been able to acquire some important ideas about the principle workings of our psychosomatic machine. But this analytical point of view is too limited; although it gives us the indispensable concepts of 'to sense', 'to feel' and 'to experience', and allows us to oppose our intellectual 'non will to experience' to our affective 'will to experience', it cannot go any further; it cannot give us the synthetic scheme that we need, a scheme capable of assigning a place to all these concepts in a coherent whole. Therefore we are going to work now in a different way. It will seem as though we are going off the point, but this is only in order to come back to it from a more general and more comprehensive angle.

The cosmos as a whole is an immense dynamism. All manifestation is the play of an energy which, from our way of looking at things is expressed by incessant changes, by perpetual motion. From this very general angle the universe appears to us as perpetual motion; nevertheless, as a manifestation of the Absolute Intemporal Principle, the cosmic movement is stable, eternal.

But if we stop regarding creation as a whole in order to regard the 'ten thousand created things' in their particularity, our mind perceives the universe as space-time *where things appear and disappear, integrate and disintegrate*. On this plane, the cosmic movement is effected in very different ways depending on the 'things' considered. In fact, the 'ten thousand things' are distributed in a hierarchy; from the initial hydrogen to the being gifted with intellect (a being of which man is at present the sole representative known to us), the 'things' are wholes of a more and more complex organization, which are more and more individualized. This hierarchy as a whole presents a certain continuity, but in the midst of this continuity two gaps exist, two

discontinuous jumps: the first jump, situated between lifeless things and living things, consists in the appearance of 'life'; the second consists in the appearance of intellect, which is manifested essentially by language, and is situated between animals and men. These two 'jumps' in the continuity of the 'ten thousand things' must not be understood as establishing completely different things. The vegetable and the animal, although life appears in them, are none the less made up of inanimate matter; they are this matter with something more. Man, in whom the intellect has appeared, is still inanimate matter and animal, plus something more.

These two gaps divide the 'ten thousand things' into three categories which we are going to study from the point of view of the two aspects of cosmic movement, the aspects of integrator and of disintegrator. Each of the three categories contains a multitude of things disposed in a continuous series; the living things, for example, go from the most simple algae to the most evolved monkey. We shall not get lost in such details, but confine ourselves to speaking schematically of inanimate things, animals and man.

An inanimate thing is integrated at the moment of its appearance, at the cost of certain materials and in certain circumstances. Then its structure, if it is not submitted to new outside influences, enjoys a relative stability. When it disintegrates, either through the attack of external agents or by virtue of an inner dynamism (radio activity), no parallel phenomena of reconstruction occur in it.

The structure of a living thing, although an integration of inanimate elements, presents a different dynamism. It is very unstable, and in the absence of all outer influences, of all sustenance, it immediately begins to disintegrate. Indeed, it disintegrates even when it does receive the necessary sustenance, but it does so in order to *reintegrate* itself into a similar structure. This is what essentially characterizes living matter: whereas the inanimate thing is only born once and only dies once, the living creature is born, dies and is reborn, continually, up to its ultimate disintegration.

It is not that the structure of an inanimate thing is immobile; at the heart of a block of iron the incessant movement of the atomic system reigns. But one does not see any individualized part of this block alter, disappear and be replaced by a new part. All living things, on the other hand, are composed of individualized parts, of cells, which alter, disappear and are replaced by new cells.

The inanimate thing, while it is integrated in its structure, needs to do nothing in order to preserve its existence. When it disintegrates, moreover, it does nothing to struggle against the outer influences in order to reconstruct in itself that which has been destroyed. The animate thing, on the contrary, is an unstable equilibrium which ceaselessly recreates itself. It is the seat of two metabolisms which are opposed and concomitant, the one of disintegration and the other of integration.

In order to understand better what characterizes life we must come back to certain quite general notions. The eternal movement which is the cosmos in its wholeness results from the symmetrical play of two forces which Chinese wisdom named Yang and Yin. The Yang is the force of change; from it result all the phenomena (that which appears and disappears). Yin is the force of resistance to change, or force of inertia; it is the *reaction* which permits the *action* of Yang. Yang, the force of change, predominates and is based on the resistance of Yin; it is at the birth of the 'ten thousand things' as well as at their death, since all integration implies the disintegration of a former thing. All manifestation results from the balanced play of the Yang, in its two aspects of integrator and disintegrator, based on the resistance of Yin.

Yang, the force which tends towards certain effects, can be seen as a cosmic *will*, or more exactly as a pair of wills, a will to integration and a will to disintegration. This concept allows us to understand what it is that truly characterizes the living thing: *all that lives is an incarnation of Yang as integrator*. Let us explain what we mean by this: observation of a living creature shows us that this creature acts, as far as it is able, in favour of its reintegration. The plant directs its growth towards water, air and light, which are necessary to maintain its existence. This effort to live, that is to say to reintegrate itself, is much more manifest still among animals; the animal struggles to persevere in existence or to protect the existence of a thing

with which it is identified (its species, its master, its shelter, etc.). If we consider then the living being which, like all else in the world, results from the concomitant play of the two cosmic wills of integration and disintegration, we find that these two wills express themselves in this being in different ways. An individual will exists in the animal which collaborates with the cosmic will of integration and represents it, while it is completely unaware of the cosmic will of disintegration. Everything happens as though the cosmos kept for itself its mission of disintegration and confided to the animal its mission of integration. Everything happens as though the will of destruction remained outside of the animal and imposed itself on it, while the will of construction is interior to it and incarnates itself in its individual will. All living things disintegrate in spite of themselves and wish to reintegrate themselves as much as they can.

The Yang is the will, or the intention, of the cosmos to change. One could say that it is *thought*, since an intention implies the conception of its goal. It is a double thought, of integration and disintegration. These two cosmic thoughts are at work in all things and even in inanimate things. Behind a chemical reaction, there are two thoughts at work: the one disintegrates substances and the other integrates one or several new substances. But neither of the two thoughts or cosmic wills is incarnated in inanimate matter; lifeless matter undergoes passively the birth or death of its structure. On the contrary, of the two cosmic thoughts which work together in the life of an animal, the one, the thought of disintegration, remains *dis*-carnate, while the other, the thought of integration, is incarnated in the thought or the individual will of the animal. The animal undergoes passively the death which constantly affects the cells of its organism, but it actively wills its constant rebirth.

'All is thought' since cosmic thought creates all manifestation. But it is with life that an individual thought appears, an individual incarnation of the integrative thought of the cosmos.

The two aspects of Yang, integrator and disintegrator, can also be called cosmic forces of convergence and divergence. Physicists distinguish the law of gravity from the law of the expansion of the universe. All integration of cosmic energy ends in the appearance of a thing created and structured in a convergent

manner, by the dynamic grouping of multiple elements around a centre. The solar system, the atomic system and the galaxy are of convergent architecture, ordered around a centre. An animal is made up of a multitude of inanimate elements, ordered in a convergent whole, and the life of this wholeness consists in the will to maintain this convergence in the face of the force of divergence which is always present. The will to live is a will of individual convergence, incarnated in the animal and struggling against the ever-threatening divergence. The animal organism is composed of inanimate elements, but that which constitutes it essentially is not this agglomeration of inanimate elements. That which constitutes the particular essence of the animal is its life; that is to say that its particular essence is an individual incarnation of the cosmic will of convergence. As soon as this incarnation has disappeared, when the animal is dead, there is no longer an animal, but only a mass of protoplasmic substance in the process of disintegration. *Each substance in the composition of the living animal is a convergent system of a certain order, but the living animal in its wholeness is a convergent system of a higher order, characterized by the individual incarnation of the cosmic will of convergence.*

The animal is the will to live, to reintegrate itself endlessly. This notion of the individual will is nothing other than the notion of the 'Ego' or 'Self'. It is not true that only man has an Ego. This error is founded upon the confusion between 'Ego' and the 'idea of Ego'. Man is the only one to have the idea of a 'Self', and as a consequence to *have* a 'Self'; but the animal, though he *has not* a 'Self', for lack of being able to conceive the idea, *is* however a 'Self'. Every living thing is an Ego, an organism animated by the will to persevere in its integration.

One sees the great novelty which arises, amongst inanimate things, with the appearance of life. This great novelty is a 'Self', a consciousness. Here again, we must beware of the habitual prejudices which make us identify the notions of thought, of consciousness, only with intellectual consciousness. The animal has no intellect, or universal consciousness, he cannot then perceive the functioning of his individual consciousness, but that does not prevent this consciousness from functioning in him.

We recognize here the postulate of Spinoza: 'Will and

Understanding are one and the same thing'. The animal is a will to live, a thought of living, an individual incarnation of the exterior Yang as integrator or of the cosmic thought of convergence. And this incarnation is exclusive; that is to say that the animal does not have a will to die, it is not an incarnation of the Yang as disintegrator; the divergent cosmic thought acts in it, as in all things, without being incarnated in it individually.

Outer circumstances are friends or enemies of this individual will to live, according to whether or not they lend themselves to its accomplishment. Thus we see that the notion of 'Me', or individual consciousness, necessarily implies the notion of hostility to the Not-Me. As soon as the Yang is individualized as integrator alone, it is conscious of a surrounding world divided into two groups, friends and enemies. As soon as there is individual consciousness, it is a consciousness of a duality.

In face of the will to live which constitutes the essence of the animal, a will which is a force of reintegrative change incarnated in this animal, the outside world, which is ceaselessly moving, represents a force of change which is foreign, a sort of foreign Yang, which the Yang as integrator in the animal must take into account. From this point of view, which is that of living consciousness, the Yang is not a single Yang, one in which the two aspects integrative and disintegrative are conciliated, but two distinct Yangs, the one which gives life, and the other which kills, between which no conciliation is possible. Also 'life', to the subjectivity of the individual consciousness, is a struggle where the Me and the Not-Me are opposed in an irreconcilable manner.

Let us see now that this dualist way of thinking about the situation of Me in the outside world is the mental projection of dualist phenomena inside the organism, phenomena of consonance, and dissonance. In fact, the organism exists in two aspects: one part as inanimate material, the elements which it integrates; the other part as Ego, the will to the reintegration of these elements. In so far as the organism is elementary material, it is always in agreement with the outside world, since these elements have no will of their own. In so far as it is Ego, the organism is only in agreement with the outside world when the latter is favourable to its will to live; it is in disagreement when the opposite is the case. Thus the organism is made up of two

aspects of which the one is always in agreement with the outside world and the other not always so. When circumstances are favourable to life the Ego of the animal is in agreement with the outside world and it is, as a result, in consonance with all the material whose integration it wills. When, on the other hand, the circumstances are unfavourable to life, the Ego of the animal is in disagreement with the outside world and it is consequently in dissonance with the materials whose integration it wills. In the first case there is an inner harmony, joy; in the second there is an inner division, suffering. The dualist view which is that of the individual consciousness before the world is a result of this inner dualism, this conscious opposition between the consonant and dissonant organic states.

Inner consonance and dissonance are produced in the animal and one cannot say that it 'feels' them since it is as a function of them that its conditioned reflexes associate the outer objects and regulate its conduct. But, for lack of language and, as a consequence, lack of intellect, it is entirely identified with its organic states and cannot have an intellectual consciousness of them which alone would differentiate it from these states. Also its conscious attention remains on the images that it has of the outside world, images only coloured by its organic states of attraction or repulsion. It is unhappily conscious of a world that wounds it; or, to put it in another way, it is conscious of an unhappy world, but it is not conscious of its unhappiness. Identified with its inner dissonance, it *is* the dissonance itself, it lives the dissonance, it conducts itself as a consequence of this dissonance, but it cannot perceive this dissonance as an object distinct from itself, the subject.

The appearance of the intellect, manifested essentially in language, the 'word', makes man quite a different creature from the animal. With intellect we step over the second gap in the hierarchy of the 'ten thousand things'; we arrive at the third and last category, of which man is the sole representative on our earth. Through intellect man touches the supreme plane where the Yang as integrator and the Yang as disintegrator are conciliated, together with the Yin, in the Tao. He can reside on this plane at the end of a complete development of his intellectual

possibilities; but he touches on this plane even before this complete development, he resides at its frontier, and this is expressed, as we are going to see, by the fact that the two aspects of Yang, integrative and disintegrative, are both incarnated in him, while the animal only incarnates the one integrative aspect.

Through intellect, let us recall, man evolves to the plane of general ideas, or pure ideas, symbols which surpass the things symbolized, comprehend them, and enjoy an autonomous reality. The supremacy of this plane of ideas is evident since it allows man to become unidentified with his psychosomatic organism. Thanks to ideas, man can in fact perceive, as objects distinct from himself, all the attributes of his animal or vital manifestation. He can conceive the following ideas: 'my body', 'my thoughts', 'my emotions', 'my life', 'my Self' and so on. *That is to say that he can perceive all the aspects of his formal manifestation no longer as being himself, but as manifesting him in a contingent way.* This view dematerializes him from his manifestations, both gross and subtle, raises 'him' on to an informal plane, upstream of all form, and is not able to bring about a positive designation. This informal 'I' can only be defined negatively. 'I' is neither my body, nor my thought, nor my life, nor my Self.

We have seen earlier that the essence of an animal is not the elements of inanimate material which constitute its organism, but this organism itself in so far as it is the will to reintegrate these elements, that is to say its Self; thus the middle cosmic level comprehends and conceals the lower level. With man the higher stage comprehends and conceals the middle level; the essence of man is no longer his organism-as-will-to-reintegrate-its-elements, it is no longer his Self; it is the idea of this Self comprehending this Self, in the informal non-individualized All. The 'proper nature' of man is the Absolute Principle or Cosmic Mind.

With the animal, the Self was a unity dominating the multitude of inanimate materials comprised by its integration. With man, the idea of Self is the Unity (we do not say *a* unity but *the* Unity) dominating the multifarious modifications of the Self, modifications of the organic states of consonance and dissonance which manifest the Self.

Man, by his essence, ceases being only Yang as integrator, as

was the animal; he is Yang as integrator and disintegrator. He incarnates at the same time the life and the death of his organism. At this level the supreme conciliation in the Tao seems quite near. Man, it seems, should be able to be the intemporal spectator, immovable and unaffected, of the eternal transformation of his organism, of this eternal transformation by which his organism is naturally affected through consonance and dissonance. He should be able to conform with 'the nature of things'; he should be able to be a will to become, conciliating the will to live and the will to die. He should be able to know immutable bliss, beyond time, independent of organic joys and sufferings (these he would comprehend while conciliating them).

Indeed this could be, but the simple appearance of the intellect is not sufficient; it is still necessary that this intellect should develop all its possibilities completely. We are going to try to show why this is so and what the complete development of our intellectual possibilities comprises.

The conciliation of Yang as integrator with Yang as disintegrator is not possible simply through the appearance and development of the intellect in the normal way; it is not possible because, in these conditions, the two aspects of Yang, although both *incarnated*, are not both realized; the 'will to live' is realized, but not the 'will to die'. In fact, with the intellect, the two aspects of universal Yang do appear, the universal will of integration and the universal will of disintegration. But these two universal wills appear in an organism which was hitherto simply an animal and which was then essentially an individual will to live and not to die. The universal will of integration, meeting the individual will, similar to it and preceding it, embraces this individual will and is thus immediately realized; on the contrary, the universal will of disintegration, appearing with the intellect on the ideal plane, does not meet any similar individual will; and thus it remains purely ideal for lack of connections which would allow it to embrace the animate and inanimate planes. Between the universal will of integration which has been realized and the universal will of disintegration which is purely ideal, the conciliation cannot be effected in the totality of the human being.

We had to make this explanation which, because of its

abstraction, was rather forbidding. Now we are going to try to show how this fact is expressed in our daily lives: that the Yang as integrator and the Yang as disintegrator are both incarnated in us, but that only the first is realized.

Observation of man shows that, although he does, like the animal, all that is necessary in order to persevere in existence, this simple perseverance is manifestly not his true goal. It does not suffice a man constantly to reintegrate his organism. The appearance of the intellect permits him to become unidentified with this organism and to perceive what happens in himself, in the same way that a subject perceives an object. He is in particular capable of perceiving his organic states of consonance and dissonance. These states, with which the animal was identified and which constituted all his affective life, become objects for man and release in him a new affective life; while the animal affectivity consisted in the reaction of his organic Ego to the outside world, human affectivity also comprehends the reactions of his ideal Ego to the consonances and dissonances of his organism's reaction to the outside world. Man, in fact, being on the plane where integration and disintegration are qualified by the absolute consonance of Tao, is capable of having some idea of, and wishes for, this absolute consonance. He is haunted by the nostalgia for the Principle, or ideal harmony, whose essential characteristic is immutability (stability, permanence residing outside space and time, away from all becoming). Also he is not content to perceive his organic states; he *evaluates* them in terms of the absolute harmony that he deeply desires, though his desire be only in terms of the idea of this absolute harmony that he himself has constructed. This distinction, between harmony and the idea that man has conceived about it, is of the greatest importance. If man has an idea of absolute harmony from the time that his intellect develops in him, he is not aware of it; he imagines it only at the level of animal affectivity which up till now he has operated with; he imagines it as a definite stabilization of the organic consonances that he knows, but as being of the same nature as the organic consonances. This way of imagining absolute harmony results in a fabulous and unreal mental construction, in which is mixed up, in a contradictory fashion, the immutability of this harmony and the dynamism inherent in

organic consonances, i.e. joys. Whereas affective life is in reality a whole in which joy and suffering are two inseparable aspects, man imagines an affective life which would only bring inner consonances and he evaluates his organic state in terms of this mental representation. Also his desire for absolute harmony is expressed by a partiality towards joy. He considers his joys as 'normal', as if they ought to be, because he sees in them the first promise taking him along the way to absolute harmony; and he considers his sufferings as abnormal, as if they ought not to be, because he sees them as contrary to his aim. Thus the affective life of man is more complex than that of the animal; it does not stop at the organic states, but surpasses them with indefinite repercussions. When his organic state is consonant a new consonance is established between this state and the ideal state claimed by man; when I am joyful, I am happy at being joyful and joyful at being happy at being joyful, and so on. It is like the indefinite series of reflections between two mirrors which are face to face. In the same way when I suffer, I am unhappy at suffering, I suffer in being unhappy at suffering, and so on.

It is not sufficient for a man to reintegrate his organism, that is, to continue to exist. *He wishes to reintegrate himself in a superior state to that in which he finds himself in the preceding instant. I wish to 'evolve', to 'progress' towards a perfect absolute integration. I struggle to arrive at being absolutely and thus to escape all disintegration.* It is not sufficient for me to exist. I want to 'be'. In order to reach this state I wish for the disintegration of my imperfect state of the moment in order to attain a better state, in order to attain, when all is said and done, the perfect state where disintegration would be abolished and where I should not continually have to reintegrate myself. Acting thus, I wish for my 'becoming' since I see my becoming as the road necessary to attain my 'being'. This will to 'become' shows well that I incarnate all the Yang, with its two aspects of integrator and disintegrator. But it is evident at the same time that the will to disintegrate is not realized in me since I only want a disintegration of the moment to carry me towards a state where this disintegration will be definitely eliminated. The will to disintegration does not act in me in an autonomous fashion, as equal to the will to integration; it acts simply as a means to satiate a

tyrannical and unlimited will to integration. It is like a man who will only let go of an object to seize a larger one; the will to let go of the small object is incarnated in this man, since he does it, but his sole aim is to seize the larger object and this will is the only one which is 'realized' in the thought of this man.

Let us see what thus becomes in man of the idea of 'life'. We have seen that the 'ten thousand things' are classified in three categories, inanimate things, animals and man, and that the jump between the first category and the second is characterized by the appearance of life. We now see that the jump between animal and man surpasses life. We do not deny that a man is animated by a will to live, but we wish to show that for him this will to live is no more than a means towards his ultimate end which is a 'will to be', conciliating life and death. The animal *is* its own life; identified with it, it does not conceive the idea that it lives, it has no other aim to its life than this life itself. Man, on the other hand, *is* no longer his life, he conceives an idea of it and from that he *has* his life, as one has anything whatever from which one is distinct and of which one disposes. Also he necessarily looks beyond this possession and he searches for a meaning, a destiny. He does not wish, as an animal wishes, to live for the sake of living; he does not want this constant reintegration for itself; he wants it in order to attain something, to arrive somewhere. But this point of arrival necessarily presupposes the end of the journey and also the becoming, full of vicissitudes, which constituted this journey. That is to say that the ultimate goal of man is non-becoming, a non-living. The Yang, as disintegrator incarnated in man, is the ideal will to attain to beyond life, ideal will to live no longer. And at the same time man wishes to live in order to arrive one day at his goal; his will to disintegration is at the service of his will to integration and only his will to integrate is realized.

We must be sure to understand that the 'living' we speak of in this way does not denote the continuation of organic existence; it denotes the conscious perception that man has of this existence beneath the forms of his inner consonances and dissonances, of his inner affective fluctuations; 'to live', for man, is to 'feel alive', to vibrate affectively in contact with the outside world. Man's will to live is his will to have affective fluctuations;

he wants them in their completeness because this completeness is indissolubly necessary in order that he may have his joys, and because he counts on these joys to lead him to absolute harmony.

Man's will to-not-live, his will to disintegration, is illusorily expressed by his will to attain ultimately a state in which he will have finished with his fluctuations and in which he will be able to escape definitely from his vicissitudes of 'living' which are necessary in transition. It is evident that only the first of these two wills is realized in the human organism; the second, influenced by the normal evolution of the intellect, remains purely ideal. In order to pass beyond 'living', and arrive in immutable 'being', man must abandon his life of the moment; but while waiting for the illusory passing beyond life to which life is supposed to be leading, man only wants to live in the present reality of his organism. It is comparable to a war which a nation wages with all its force with the 'idea' of thus destroying the principle of war. The wish that this nation has for peace is not realized, its wish for war only is realized in its apparent structure.

All these ideas will become more precise in later chapters. Let us conclude, for the present, by saying this: the conciliation of Yang as integrator with Yang as disintegrator does not come about in man while he only fulfils his wish for affective fluctuation, his 'will to experience'. A new inner work is necessary in order to complete the development of his intellectual possibilities, a work which will bring about the fulfilment in the human organism of the will opposed to his affective fluctuations, of the 'non will to experience'. As long as this work is not affected, man, although situated by right on the supreme plane, is as though he were not there. In this ambiguous situation he is only a superior animal, a strange creature in whom two parts, inadequate one to the other, are brought together. Unidentified in principle with his psychosomatic organism, he lives identified with the formal consciousness that he has of his organic states. Being *One* by virtue of his proper nature, he is at the same time divided between the multitude of perceptions that he has of his Self and to which he identifies himself because of his partiality for his joys.

NOTE

The hierarchy of three cosmic planes—inanimate, living and intellectual—manifests the law of the octave of Ancient Wisdom. Thus in our musical scale there are, in an octave, two semi-tones; one between mi and fa, the other between si and do; these two semi-tones represent two gaps which determine, in the octave, three distinct domains. It is not true to say that nature does not go by jumps; two discontinuities divide its continuity. Modern science, forgetting ancient teaching, claims that it will realize one day the synthesis of living matter from inanimate matter; and it thinks that man differs from the animal only by having a more complex disposition of his living matter. It is true that the animal consists in its structure of all sorts of inanimate matter, and that man consists in his structure of an animal. But the animal is essentially a conscious individual which comprehends and goes beyond inanimate matter; and man is essentially an intellectual or universal consciousness which comprehends and goes beyond this inanimate matter and his individual consciousness. Life can annex inanimate matter and the intellect can annex life, but it is only thus, from higher to lower, that the union of the three cosmic planes can be realized.

CHAPTER 8

THE CONFLICT OF HUMAN LIFE

The appearance of the intellect allows man to disidentify himself with his psychosomatic organism, with his Self. The idea of 'my Self' is disidentification from the Self. Thanks to this idea, I *am* no longer a Self as an animal is one; I *have* this Self; I am the owner of my manifestations. But when I conceive the idea of 'my Self' I do not continue to be this idea; I formulate it. I am not content to be this 'I' which is not my Self. I formulate the conscious idea of 'I'; the 'I' would not be able to appear without this formulation. From then on, in formally conceiving the idea of 'I' which disidentifies me from my Self, I inevitably identify myself with this formal idea. Certainly the intellect, having incarnated the 'idea of Self' or 'I' in words, can manufacture the idea of the idea of Self, and the idea of the idea of the idea Self (we meet again here the two face-to-face mirrors); but these successive efforts of disidentification only make me escape from one mental form in order to fall into another with which I am again identified. The intellect causes me to escape from my particular organic form, but it does not go further and cause me to escape from the general sphere of form. It has broken the narrow limits of the Self, but the sphere to which it has thus introduced me is not limitless; it is only a sphere whose limits can be pushed back indefinitely without ever being abolished. The intellect has only delivered me from the finite to enclose me in the mathematical infinite. Whereas the metaphysical infinite is limitless, the mathematical infinite has limits, indefinitely extensible, but always existing; the mathematical infinite is only *indefinite*. Thus the possibility of conceiving the idea of an Ego, because it implies the necessity of naming this Ego, places me in a strange prison whose walls are indefinitely extensible, but which is none the less a prison. I get away from a finite form in order to fall (the original 'fall') into general indefinite form and no form now is able to deliver me. Thanks to my intellect, I transcend my

psychosomatic Self in the 'I', but my formal intellect is powerless to transcend this idea of 'I'.

Why does not my intellect raise me to the infinite 'I' without naming this 'I' and without thus enclosing me in an indefinite 'I'? Because the human intellect appears in an animal, in an individualized Yang, a machine automatically tending towards its individual affirmations, a creature that *seizes* all that is not his particular Self in a dualist perspective, 'subject-object'. Because of this automatism of 'seizing', the intellect only begins to act through the formation of words (seizing conscious formal ideas). I cannot accede to the idea of the Self without formulating the word 'Self' and I cannot formulate the word 'Self' without being made prisoner of my own formulation. An internal contradiction thus exists without a doubt in the formal intellectual consciousness.

The new prison, in which my intellect encloses me in delivering me from the limits of my organism, is a very special prison, since it is entirely built by the prisoner himself. It is illusory. Man is not a prisoner, but everything happens as though he were. Put in another way, his prison is a fantasy; the 'I', the idea that man makes of himself, is a formation created by fantasy. When the oriental sage dismisses the man who has spoken to him at length of his life and counsels him to reflect on this question—'Who is this "I" of which you have spoken to me so much?'—he directs the reflection towards our fundamental illusion.

The representation which is in the spirit of man, behind the word 'I', is a fantastic or 'monstrous' form in the proper sense of this term (mythical monsters—the siren, the centaur, the griffon—are creatures in whom borrowed parts of different creatures abnormally co-exist). One finds here, in an impossible formal co-existence, ideas which are irreconcilable on the plane of forms, the idea of universal and individual.

We must be clear as to what we mean by saying that these ideas are irreconcilable, on 'the plane of forms'. For this purpose we should first see how metaphysics, by directing our intellectual intuition beyond form, evolves easily among opposites which are apparently contradictory. Here for example are two concepts of 'principle' and 'manifestation'; I cannot formally conceive their

conciliation; I cannot create a mental form, a word, which expresses the result of their conciliation, but I can very well conceive the idea that they may be conciliated. If I cannot formulate in a word the idea that the 'universal' and 'individual' are only one in reality, or more exactly 'the one' which they form in being conciliated, I can very easily conceive the existence of this unity. It is the same for the dualities: 'transcendence—immanence', 'general—particular', etc. As Guénon has well recalled, mystery is not inconceivable; it is only that we cannot formulate it; etymologically the word 'mystery' signifies 'that which one cannot speak of'. Mystery is an understanding which we cannot seize and express by formal consciousness, which we cannot then *have* as, from a dualistic point of view, a subject has an object; but it is an understanding in which our intellect can reside. The fact that I cannot see my eye does not impede me in having the consciousness of having an eye which sees.

But that which is easy in metaphysics, thanks to the intuition of the informal, becomes impossible when it is a case of the Ego implicated in its own life, because the Ego, the individual Yang, is essentially formal. The concept that man has of himself could not be abstract, upstream of form, since it is in terms of this that man lives concretely. This concept is not explicit among the great majority of human beings, but it is necessarily capable of being made explicit, formulated, since it resides on the formal plane where all the phenomena of life develop. And it is because the concept that man has of himself is formal that the contradictions appear in an irreconcilable and fabulous way.

Let us study what there is in the mind of the man when he says 'I'. 'I' is the idea of Self; it is then distinct from Self, from all the possible aspects of its psychosomatic manifestations. As owner of Self, he is independent of Self; he perceives it as an object; he is not this object. This 'I-subject', distinct from relative manifestation, could not possibly in itself be relative; it is then absolute subject. Distinct from individual Self, it could not in itself be individual; it is then universal. Distinct from phenomena, it could not possibly in itself be phenomenon; it is then noumenon, it is absolute reality.

But this idea of Self is constructed on the Self and constitutes the integration of the consonances and dissonances which are its

forms. The Self, as integrator of the elements which make up its constitution, necessarily presupposes the existence of these elements; independent of these elements in its very essence, it depends on them in practice, that is to say that it depends on them in so far as it feels itself to exist, in so far as it is a conscious animal. In the same way, the 'I', independent of the forms of the Self in its essence, depends on the Self in practice, that is to say that it depends on the Self in so far as it thinks about itself, in so far as it is intellectual consciousness. Thus, while *being* 'Absolute Reality', it participates in the relative reality of the Self; while being universal, it participates in individuality; in practice it is necessarily conceived, at the same time, as non-individual and as individual. I can imagine that I could have been Julius Caesar, or Joan of Arc or a dog or a tree, or a stone, but I cannot imagine myself as other than I am without representing myself as being *someone or something else*. In so far as it is this fact in terms of which I live, the 'I' is necessarily conceived as incarnate, although it is born distinguished from the flesh; it is necessarily conceived in space-time, although it is born distinguished from the spatio-temporal Self.

The philosophical task of expressing the 'I' in a manner which conciliates the irreconcilable has resulted, in the human mind, in the fictitious notion of the 'Person'. This notion challenges the individual; the human 'person' is not his animal individuality. But although escaping thus from the individual, the 'person' is no longer at the universal level where it vanishes as an entity; it remains half way, on the frontier, without having more reality than the line which separates an area of shadow from an area of light.

The 'I' is conceived by man to distinguish himself from the temporal 'Self' and he thus escapes from time. But, the 'I' is not conceived as intemporal, or eternal, because that would suppose that it had not started, that it never appeared, that it was not born. From our point of view, the 'I' is born with the intellect; it remains half way, between the temporal and the intemporal; it is conceived as having started, but as having to last perpetually. Man thinks that he was born on a certain day and he claims that what was born then will last perpetually, beyond death.

This fantastic dualist representation of 'I' brings in its wake a similar representation of the cosmos. The 'I', conceived in a manner which personalizes it, cannot pretend to coincide with the cosmic totality. The cosmos, then, is split into two parts. One of the parts is the 'I-reality' which represents my 'person' (my Self, my organism, and the things with which I identify this Self). This first part incarnates, in my cosmic representation, the one reality, or Being; unconditioned, it defines itself as: 'I am that I am'. The other part of the cosmos cannot be reality since reality is one; it cannot define itself. It is what is left of the cosmos after the 'I' has been established; that is to say that it is defined as a function of the 'I-reality'. We can call it the 'non-reality' on condition that this term is understood in a hostile sense, in the sense of 'counter-reality'. In fact, if that which is not the 'I' were understood as being able to be the friend of the 'I' as well as its enemy, this 'non-reality' would be conceived as independent of reality, as being opposite to it in an autonomous fashion. But this 'non-reality' which would be autonomous, which would then define itself, would be like a second reality opposite to the first, and this would be impossible since reality is essentially unity, the integration of all that exists. The second part of the cosmos, that which is not the 'I', can only be conceived as a function of the 'I'; it cannot be conceived as being eventually favourable to the 'I' since the 'I' is absolutely sufficient in itself; thus it can only be conceived as hostile to the 'I'; that which is not 'reality' is against 'reality'. My representation of the cosmos, from the point of view where I establish the idea of Self, brings with it one part, the 'one reality', which is absolute and which is my 'person' (indefinitely surpassing myself as individual) and another part, a 'menace' hovering over my 'reality'.

I open a brief parenthesis here in order to address my reader. While you read the last paragraph you have possibly protested; you may have objected that the cosmic representation which I described was no doubt mine, but not yours. I hope however to succeed in showing you that what I say applies to man in general, to all men. This representation of the cosmos, the aspects and consequences of which I am going to develop, is buried in the depths of the human psyche and the ideas that man has in

his surface consciousness are very different. I wish precisely to make explicit what is implicit in us and to show how it enlightens us about our behaviour, our feelings and our beliefs. Assume then that what I say is perhaps true; wait until I have finished before you subscribe for or against the view that I put forward.

Our profound representation of the cosmos divides it into two parts which we have to define with precision. The first is 'reality' or 'being', and we have called it also 'I-reality' because it is thanks to the intellectual integration of the forms of our particular self that we are raised to the concept of general reality. Reality is represented to us in a very real and original way by our own organism, but one would make a grave mistake in believing that the distinction we speak of is the distinction 'my organism—the outside world'. Indeed, though the 'I-reality' is originally identified with my organism, with my Self, it can later be identified with no matter what aspect of the outside world with which my organism associates itself in a sympathetic affinity. It is the idea of my organism which is at first associated with the idea of reality and which is then 'made absolute'. But then the idea of Self which has been made absolute is projected on to all the things of which the perception produces internal consonance of the Self, that is to say that it is projected on to all the things which are felt by my organism as good, favourable, friendly. The 'I-reality' is not only my organism but, by delegation, all that my Self more or less approves of and which is thus more or less made absolute. This explains why different men experience the fear of death in so disproportionate a way. It is sometimes said that all the problems of man revolve around the problem of death; this is only true if one understands death as the disappearance of what man identifies with his 'I-reality'; what he thus identifies could be his own organism (original identification) and then man is anguished and revolted by his own death; but it could be some other thing (a being, a work, a cause, etc.) and these identifications can eclipse the original identification; in this case man does not fear his own death and it is because of the destruction of something else that he experiences revolt and anguish.

The identification of my 'I-reality' with anything whatsoever

ends up by my making this thing absolute. What, essentially, is this 'making absolute'? It is a mental association tying the idea of the thing to the idea of reality. Because of this association, what is dear to me is endowed with a certain *necessity*, which the real cosmic order does not imply, but which results from my own decree; it seems to me that what is dear to me *must* exist in a permanent way, that the destruction of this thing is 'impossible' as the destruction of 'absolute reality' is impossible (someone attending at the death of a person he adored cried out: 'It is impossible').

The 'I-reality', then, is represented by my Self which is its original core, but also by a whole world of outer forms associated with my Self, a world different for each man and which is modified during the course of his experience. One could say, roughly speaking, that the 'I-reality' is, at each instant, what I am attached to, what counts for me in the world, my 'values'; to see the value of a thing and to see it as real is the same thing. This reality, we say, is the first part of our dualist representation of the world. It is the first part, though this is not because we happened by chance to start with it in our exposition; reality is first because it is unconditioned, because it defines itself. It shines, is luminous, by itself, because it *is* by itself.

The second part of our cosmic representation is second because it is unable to define itself. It is 'that which is not reality' and we have shown why it is necessarily hostile to reality. It is reality that defines it; it could not define itself as 'I am that I am not', but it ought to be defined as 'that which menaces that which is'. For the clarity of the exposition we shall need sometimes to designate this second part of our representation as 'Not-Self' or 'nothingness', but the real sense of these expressions will always be 'the menace', 'the enemy'. This 'menace', hovering over reality and in opposition to it, is obscure, mysterious, dark (the outer darkness), because it is not obvious in itself and only becomes evident in the wake of reality, as the shadow only exists in the wake of the object in the light of the sun.

This dualism is in the class of metaphysics in the sense that it is the refraction, in our psyche, of our metaphysical ignorance; it corresponds to the fact that while we are able—thanks to our intellect—to live always according to metaphysical truth, we

live in practice without realizing this ability. We shall see soon how it is expressed on the plane of our phenomena, but for the present we must describe it as it is deep in us, behind our manifested life.

The dualism constituted by the 'I-reality' (what is real to my eyes) and what menaces this 'reality' can be understood as the opposition between two adversaries which cannot be reconciled. But we must be careful not to liken this opposition to the opposition of the struggles of our daily life. In the struggles of life, two autonomous adversaries confront each other in a symmetrical way; they exist independently, of each other, and their reciprocal hostility is contingent. In the dualism that we are studying, the two adversaries are tied together by a very different and very strange rapport. The best way to broach this question is to go to the beginning of this duel and ask ourselves: 'Who is responsible? Who started it?' We are going to see that each of the adversaries 'starts', but by no means in the same way; the 'I-reality' is responsible for the combat *in its principle* and the 'menace' is responsible for it *in fact*.

'Reality' sets itself up and defines itself at the moment when my intellect conceives the idea of my Self; the 'I' sets itself up *absolutely* by distinguishing itself from my relative organism; it then brings into being all that represents reality for me; it 'makes absolute' my Self and all that with which my Self identifies itself by consonant affinity. This totality of phenomena claims then to be *absolutely*; that is to say that it claims *to have to exist* by necessity; it is *that which must exist*. Since the 'I-reality' *must exist* it must never cease to exist and thus it claims indefinite permanence; it claims then to be all-powerful against what would be able eventually to try to annihilate it. This absolute pretension of the 'I-reality' necessarily makes an enemy of all things unfavourable to its existence; it sees them as an intentional menace. The *intention* that the 'I-reality' has to exist absolutely confers a hostile *intention* on all that would be an obstacle to its existence; the *pretension* of the 'I' to 'being' creates the fiction of the 'against-being' which would claim to annihilate 'being'.

Therefore we say that it is the 'I-reality' which is responsible in principle for the conflict, in setting itself up at the very beginning as absolute, it sets up at the same time all that is not it as 'the enemy'; that is to say that it creates the situation of conflict.

But it is the Not-Self which, according to my egoistic view of things, is responsible for the conflict in fact. Indeed, when the 'I' sets itself up as absolute, it does not set itself up against anyone. It defines itself and is sufficient in itself. When it identifies itself with my organism, or with something friendly to my organism, it is careful to distinguish this thing from all that is not it, but without aggressive intention towards that thing, whatever it might be; the Not-Self, at that moment, is not considered at all. The intention of the 'I', when it sets itself up, only refers to itself; it wants to exist absolutely, without temporal limitation. Its original wish is entirely peaceful. If the 'I' fights later, it is because I see my intention attacked by a contrary intention which appears to me unnecessarily hostile. In fighting what opposes my will I see myself only defending myself or counter-attacking. The 'I' does not take into account that it has set up its enemy when it set itself up; so it sees itself persecuted ('They hate me without cause'), it only fights under the constraint of persecution. Besides, what it wants during this fight is not victory for itself; it wants, by means of the victory, to get rid of the enemy for good and of the fight that the enemy imposes on it. It does not struggle to dominate the menacing adversary, but to get rid of the 'menace' and to enjoy bliss without menace, the bliss which should never have been menaced. The profound wish of man is for security for all that counts for him. Paradise is not a place where one triumphs over one's adversary, but a place where there is no adversary.

Such is the strange situation that the idea of an Ego places me in, an idea identified with my organism with all its dependences, an idea which is incarnated on the formal plane. I see myself persecuted without cause by a wicked adversary whose image I created without being aware of doing so. I am responsible for the struggle and at the same time I do not see myself responsible for any of its vicissitudes. I wish with all my heart for the end of these exhausting hostilities; however, unless my present view of things is abolished, only my death can put an end to them.

LATENT DUEL AND MANIFEST DUEL

Let us see now how the duel whose general structure we have described acts in the particular, how the *latent* duel expresses itself as a manifest duel. The latent duel opposes the 'I-reality' and the 'menace'; we can say also that it opposes the Self and the Not-Self; but these illusory abstract entities can only struggle effectively through the intermediary of champions who represent them in the concrete (when France and Germany were at war, it was only the French and German soldiers who actually killed one another). The champion of the 'I-reality' is single, it is my psychosomatic organism. The Not-Self, on the other hand, can have all sorts of representatives, according to the various circumstances of my life.

Each of my combats then brings with it a general or profound aspect in which the 'I-reality' is opposed to the 'menace' and a particular superficial aspect in which my organism is opposed to some outer thing. The manifest combat is the staging of the profound combat; it is a 'scenario' charged with playing, on the plane of phenomena, the metaphysical fight of Being and Nothingness. So one can say that man '*dramatizes*' his life; the drama of life is the play of the original dualism created by the intellect.

Man is normally unaware of the profound dualism immediately beneath the surface drama; he believes that what is necessary for him consists entirely in obtaining such and such a success or the showing of such and such a threat; he does not see that he plays a fictitious scenario of which he is the creator and producer.

We must clearly understand in what way the scenarios of our struggles are fictitious. Let us suppose that there is a business man who struggles against a rival; the efforts that this man makes are not fictitious, neither is his success or failure; the unfolding of his struggle on the plane of phenomena has the reality of this plane. But his struggle is fictitious, nevertheless, because of the manner in which he envisages it; it is so because, in spite of what he believes, he does not want the success for itself; at heart he only wants the success in order to affirm his 'being' against the 'menace' incarnated in his rival; he does not want success, complete success, but the idea of success which is

proof of his being; he does not want success, he wants 'to succeed'. This applies even to my struggle for the basic necessities of life, in order not to die of hunger; on the surface I struggle in order that my organism should continue to exist and that is not a fiction. But my struggle is fictitious because, ever since the intellect appeared in me, my organic existence is no longer an end in itself for me; my real goal is not to live, but to 'be' absolutely. My struggle to live is a fictitious scenario on which I gamble with my Being as stakes, on which I take up the challenge of the Not-Self which would annihilate, in my organism, the representative of the 'I-reality'. My struggle is not fictitious in itself, but it is so in so far as I represent it to myself in imagination, in so far as I dramatize it. When the animal struggles to live it does not represent its struggle to itself in an imaginative reflection; for lack of an intellect capable of reflecting on to itself the focus of its attention, it does not dramatize its life and the struggles which it carries on are not fictitious. But man is not an animal. If an extreme or unexpected danger threatens me it can happen that I struggle for a while as an animal does; in the urgency of the danger, I have no time to look at anything other than the outside world; I act without having the time to look at myself acting; but as soon as the urgency diminishes, while still struggling, I *see that I struggle* and immediately I dramatize my action; I no longer struggle in order to live, but in order to defend the cause of my 'being', to affirm it by my power to triumph over danger. It is useless to multiply examples. Each time we defend something against danger, we defend this something because it is a part, in our representation of the world, of 'that which must exist absolutely'; we defend 'reality' against the 'menace'; our struggle is fictitious because the dualism 'reality-menace' is fictitious.

The scenarios of our combats can disguise themselves in innumerable forms, but they divide into two categories which it is useful to distinguish. Our combats can be defensive or offensive; I can play the role of prey which struggles not to be eaten, or else the role of the beast of prey which struggles to eat the prey, in spite of its resistance. After all that we have already said, we can leave for the moment the defensive combat and speak only of the offensive combat. We have seen that, from

our dualistic viewpoint of the world, it is always the 'Not-Self' which 'started'; how are we to understand, then, that sometimes I take the initiative in the struggle. This apparent contradiction resolves itself easily. The situation in which I create the idea of an Ego brings with it, fundamentally, a 'menace' hovering over my 'reality'; that is a permanent situation; even in those moments when circumstances smile on me, when the Not-Self does not manifest itself, its menace does not cease to exist. Now in the face of this constant menace, there are two tactics: I can wait for the attack and defend myself from it; I can also be the first to attack. I always see the menace starting it; the fact that I start the row does not contradict this idea; the attack is, for me, a preventive attack. We find a very simple example of this in the struggle that so many men undergo in order to get rich. Money represents a power capable of protecting the 'I-reality'; it is a shield against the inevitable 'harsh blows'; it is a trump for the Self in the face of the Not-Self. If such and such a man struggles to accumulate without limit, it is in order to accumulate a force in the Self which can never be in excess in face of an adversary whose force is mysterious and indefinite. It is the same in the struggle for fame; the more there are people who know me, people, that is to say, for whom I exist, the more my being is affirmed in face of my nothingness, and I can never have too many affirmations before the menace; negation is always hovering close.

The combat against the menace expresses itself in scenarios whose form depends on my personal structure and on circumstances, but which are all wagers in which I gamble my being against my nothingness. Each wager creates a chance in which lies the dilemma: 'success-failure'; each wager is a 'challenge' in which I am opposed to an adversary and in which I want 'to succeed'; the challenge can be thrown down by my adversary (defensive combat) or by me (offensive combat); but in both cases the same situation of latent duel exists before the challenge and I always have the impression that the challenge comes from the outside: the mountaineer who looks at Everest has the impression that this summit defies him to climb it; if he does not dare to take the risk, he would see himself as denied by the mountain; and his attack on Everest is for him a preventive attack. There

is no belief without antagonistic doubt. The 'I-reality' is my belief in my personal Absoluteness; the 'menace' is the doubt inherent in this belief. All my combats in life are efforts which I make to find proofs of my Absoluteness, with the hope of thus crushing my doubt. This combat is one without a possible issue since the doubt increases with the belief, as the shadow increases with the object; but I do not know this and I struggle without respite; if an objection to my being appears, I struggle to refute it; if circumstances offer me the possibility of finding an extra proof, I feel myself to be bound to acquire it, because to neglect a proof would be to make the game more doubtful.

AN INTERPRETATION OF THE ATTITUDES OF THE OUTER WORLD AS 'INTENTIONAL'

We will take up later the question of the modalities, defensive and offensive, of our manifest combat. Let us come back again now to the latent combat and let us see how we necessarily interpret in an 'intentional' sense the attitude of the outside world. We can say first of all that this interpretation is always erroneous. This is evident where material things are concerned because material things, having no will of their own, are not able to have intentions; Everest has never intentionally defied anyone. But it is also erroneous where animate beings are concerned which have a will of their own and, as a consequence, have intentions. In fact each animate being is an individualized Yang which wishes to go through its evolution; each animal wills its own life; each man wants his own 'being', he wishes to assure the triumph of his 'I-reality' over the 'menace'. Each animate being has a constant intention which concerns itself; 'itself' is its own reality; *it would not know how to have an intention towards anything else.* When I look at the vista of life, I have the impression that all those beings which fight have hostile intentions towards one another; if I see two beings helping each other I have the impression that they have reciprocal friendly intentions. But in reality, each being, through the action which he is in the process of carrying out, pursues exclusively the defence of his 'reality'. A mother struggles to save her sick child, she 'loves' her child, that is to say that she identifies herself with him by projecting her 'I'; her child forms a part of what is real

for her, or what must exist absolutely; in struggling for the life of her child she defends her 'I-reality' against the 'menace'; her friendly intention is not towards the child itself but towards what it represents for her. A man seeks to harm me; it is because my image is implicated in a scenario in which I represent for him the Not-Self and in which my annihilation will confirm for him his 'I-reality'; this man has no unfavourable intention towards me; his action is motivated by the sole intention that he can have, an intention to confirm his 'I-reality'; my ruin happens to be, in a contingent way, an effective way to confirm his 'reality'. Each man believes that there is something which has the intention to destroy his 'reality'; in fact, nothing has this intention; I lend to my enemy this intention to harm me and this man acts in a way in which he lends me the same intention. All our affective relationships are misunderstandings.

In our present condition, this erroneous interpretation is inevitable. From the moment that the idea of an Ego identifies itself with a part of the cosmos and that the cosmos appears divided into two, the 'I-reality' as the one part and the 'rest' as the other part, it is necessary, since reality is one, that the 'I' should be alone in defining itself; 'the rest' must then be defined as a function of the 'I', all its dynamisms must be seen as a function of the 'I'; that is to say that all its deeds must be seen as intentional towards the 'I'. Thus each of us, in spite of what he can *know* intellectually, *feels* himself as the unique centre of the world. But I react differently according to whether the intention that I lend to the outside world is favourable or unfavourable. If it is unfavourable, I assign it to the outside world, to the Not-Self which 'menaces'. But I cannot do as much for the favourable intention. As we have seen earlier, what is not the 'I' cannot be favourable to it because this attitude would confer on the Not-Self an impossible autonomy; the 'I-reality' is absolutely self-sufficient and nothing which is not it can help it; the Not-Self is necessarily an 'against me'. So when the outside world is favourable to me, I cannot see its friendly intention as exterior to my 'I-reality'. I interiorize it, I attribute it to myself. If a friend renders me a service, I do not see him as a representative of the Not-Self, as the Not-Self, which has done a favour to my 'reality' through this friend; I see it as a representation of my 'I', which has affirmed itself against the 'menace'. In my physical, superficial view of things, someone who is not me has been kind to me; but in my profound metaphysical view of things, I have triumphed over the Not-Self in enjoying the good intention of my friend. This helps us to understand why we feel our innate gifts, the chances which happen to us, and in general all the advantages that we enjoy without having 'merited' them, as glorifying successes; we are often more proud of them than of the happy outcome of our own efforts; this is because, according to our implicit view of things, all that is favourable to us is interpreted as a victory of our Self over the Not-Self which, by definition, can only be unfavourable to us. Sartre has said: 'Hell is other people'; this formula is correct when it concerns only our fictitious interpretation of the cosmos; in fact, then, what is favourable to me is myself and what is 'another' is necessarily my enemy. But in reality it is not 'the other people' who are my hell, but the unawareness according to which I fictitiously create 'other people's' intentional malevolence towards me.

FEAR AND HOPE

All that has been said shows that fear constantly lies at the bottom of our affective life. The 'I-reality' plays the part of the source, but my intellect can only be conscious of it in a formal way while at the same time being conscious of an outer obstacle to my personal all-powerfulness, of a 'menace' hovering over my 'reality'. I can only be conscious of my 'reality' as menaced. The fear is there, then, from the start and all my efforts are going to strain after exorcising it for good. Sometimes these efforts seem to be efficacious; I happen to affirm myself, to vanquish the 'enemy'; my fear seems to be destroyed. But as I am not really all-powerful, a negation soon appears to distress me; the 'enemy' revives and my fear with it. I understand then that when my fear seemed destroyed it was only masked. Masked or not, my fear is constant. Many men do not feel their dissonant states as fear; they are furious or revolted, they say, but they are not afraid. However, if they were to analyze themselves more deeply they would see that their anger is a counter-attack, aimed at destroying a menace that they dread; they perhaps are not afraid of what represents the 'menace' in their scenario, but, behind

their aggressive behaviour, they are afraid of the 'menace' itself.

The quality which relieves us by hiding, at times, our fundamental fear, is *hope*. When our metaphysical dualism, 'reality-menace', is incarnated in physical dualism, a practical combat is possible and with it our victory; hope appears at the same time as the incarnation of the 'enemy'. Our affirmations gladden us only in so far as they contain hope. In fact no success obtained on the plane of phenomena can be a definite triumph over the 'menace'; a relative real success cannot resolve the absolute fictitious dualism. If an affirmation gladdens me, it does so not in itself, but in so far as it makes me hope for the continuation of my climb towards a victory which is always in the future. Sometimes I have the impression of attaining my goal and of being happy; but, if I observe myself well, I see that I build up a thousand agreeable projects; I am not happy about what I have obtained, but about the hope that my success brings me. My happiness is never in the present; it projects me into the future; it is hope. We wait all our lives for the definite victory of the 'I-reality', a victory which cannot be, because of the very way in which our combat is set up. Popular wisdom has always recognized that 'man lives on hope'. The dualism, 'fear-hope', thus expresses, in our affective life, our fictitious representation of the cosmos. Fear and hope co-exist without conciliation in the depths of our psyche, while on the surface they appear alternately as do night and day.

'SUPERSTITION'

Man sees himself faced by an outside world which is sometimes favourable and sometimes unfavourable. Certain things smile on him and become thus included in his 'reality'; others resist him or menace him and are ranged in the camp of the 'enemy'. He can, by his own efforts, incline the outside world to smile on him, *but only up to a certain point*. Beyond this point the domain of chance and of mischance begins. To this world which escapes his efforts, man inevitably lends, as we have seen, intentions regarding himself. He sees chance as a friendly intention of the outside world, mischance as an unfriendly intention. He then necessarily wonders about the causes of these opposed intentions and, not understanding that they are illusory, he sees

them as enigmatic. He does not succeed in finding the causes that he seeks in the outside world which is either friendly or unfriendly and he winds up with contradictory conclusions; when his luck is good he says: 'The world caresses me because it likes me'; and when his luck is bad he says: 'The world strikes me because it detests me'. This only leads to a new enigma: 'Why does the world love me sometimes and detest me at other times?' Thus, behind the caresses and blows of his luck and ill luck, he logically seeks a single cause, a first cause which would determine the outside world in one sense or another.

The cause, seen as an intention, is thus 'personalized'. Because man is personalized himself, he necessarily conceives the idea of a person who determines the attitude towards him of the outside world; an intention towards a person is inevitably conceived by that person as emanating from another person. This person, supposed by man to be behind the enigma of his 'destiny', is conceived as capable of releasing or withholding the action of the 'menace' which hovers over the 'I-reality'; this person releases or retains the sword of Damocles; this man then feels that this person is resident *above* him. Thus is born the 'superstition' (*super stare*), the belief, in 'someone' who dominates man and determines his destiny.

This idea of 'someone' only resolves the famous enigma in order to create a new one. 'Who is this someone?' Men reply to this question in very diverse ways, but before enumerating the solutions principally proposed, let us see what they have in common. This 'someone' is conceived as *'supernatural'* by definition since he can do as he pleases with natural events; even those who name him 'Nature' conceive this 'Nature' with a capital 'N' as a principle dominating all natural manifestations, that is to say as supernatural. This 'someone' moreover is *all-powerful*. It is conceived finally, as we have seen, as a person. We must come back to this point and make it more precise. Some men will tell us sincerely: 'I assure you that this "someone" is in no way personal in my eyes'. He means that he does not personalize the master of his destiny in any describable form, either gross or subtle; he does not grant him any distinct attributes and cannot therefore speak about him. But if this man cannot speak of the 'supernatural' as he conceives it, this inability does not prevent

him from conceiving it, nor from posing it intellectually as 'that which determines things'; and this mental form, however synthesizing and necessary it might be, is none the less a form. Perhaps this man would even go so far as to take exception to every concept of the 'supernatural', but if he truly examines his psychological life he will discover that the sole fact of conceiving the idea of chance and mischance implies a directing principle; to give to this principle the name 'luck' changes nothing. All men inevitably conceive, whether they take it into account or not, the formal idea of a director of their destiny. It does not matter that this principle is not seen as personal, it still exists; the man who defines this principle as nothing defines it all the same; he poses it intellectually, that is to say that he personalizes it in face of his person. All the replies given by man in response to the question—'Who is this someone?'—have still one more point in common; they are all illusory since the question to which they reply, emanating from an illusory dualist concept, is itself illusory.

There is little interest in examining the various beliefs concerning this *'head that man puts above his own'*. It is usually a question of two principles, one of good and the other of evil, themselves surmounted by a supreme arbitrator. Or else it is a God of justice who caresses or strikes man according to his merits. Or else it is a God essentially good who, even when he strikes, sends to man what is the best for the totality of his future; this good God can otherwise confer the execution of his blows on a power of evil who obeys him. Or else as we have seen already, it can be a blind divinity that one names 'destiny', 'chance' or 'history'.

Let us see the difference which exists between these 'superstitions' and the formal notions utilized by metaphysics. In speaking of Yin, of Yang, of Tao, of the supreme plane, of the absolute principle, metaphysics also seems to put a head above the head of man. But the metaphysician only uses these conceptual forms in order to understand the real order of things, to attain one day the end of the necessary analysis, the surpassing of all form. The notions that he uses *he only uses*, as one uses the finger to direct another to look towards the moon. Under pain of falling into superstition, he does not forget that what he enunciates is only a way of speaking, an artifice utilized by the intellect in order to attain to the limits of its formal domain. He does not forget the relative nature of these tools (words in fact are tools); he does not make their content absolute, that is to say that *he does not believe in them*; he sees them as valuable means to ask himself about reality, but not as *entities in themselves about which to ask himself*. He does not forget that it is his mind which poses all concepts which, as a consequence, could not *be* in opposition to his mind, in opposition to himself. Zen is at the same time atheistic and deistic; it is deistic in so far as it sees a transitory utility in the concept of absolute principle, but it is atheistic in so far as it does not believe in its 'reality'. When the Zen patriarch says to us 'If you meet the Buddha, kill him', he recalls to us the interest that we have in not taking the productions of our mind for autonomous entities. When he says 'Do not tarry where the Buddha is and pass rapidly to where he is not', he shows us how, without in any way challenging the idea of the principle, he refuses to stop there, to see it as reality; that is to say that he refuses to believe in it. Zen, pure metaphysics, has intuitive intellectual evidence and does not despise the formulae which express this evidence; but it has no belief; it does not put any head higher than its own.

Thus it is important to recognize in man the possibility of reflecting, without falling into superstition, about his illusory view of a personal destiny. But yet again, even if I am a good metaphysician, capable of thinking outside all belief, I *see*, so long as I have not attained satori, in terms of the profound beliefs instilled in me. And these 'subconscious' superstitions express themselves in many ways. Since I believe in the existence of 'someone' who intentionally determines my luck and ill luck, I necessarily believe that there exists a rapport between the intention of this 'someone' and my actions or perceptions; that is to say that I believe in the possibility of my influencing or foreseeing the hazards of my life. Many men see a premonitory sense in certain signs—Friday the thirteenth, meeting a funeral, and so on—and I may dread to express my confidence in the future because my arrogance would risk vexing the director of destiny and driving him thus to cast down my arrogance; if, however, I have committed this imprudence, I endow some gesture (touch-

ing wood) with an exorcising power. Luck can appear to me as a matter of balance; then I dread to rejoice in my good luck as if I increased, by so doing, the bill of unhappiness that I would have to pay later. It can appear to me on the other hand as a series: I fear then to undertake anything whatever in a period already marked by several mishaps (never two without a third). An extremely exotic belief would have it that the director of destiny should justly reward or punish the 'good' and the 'bad' actions; then man dreads the consequences of his mistakes; he supposes himself to be guilty when destiny distresses him—'What have I done to the good God that this unhappiness should happen to me?' He performs good acts—work on himself, sacrifices, alms—in order to gain favour for some enterprise he undertakes. Superstitious manifestations are innumerable; each one of us will discover some in himself if he will examine himself with care.

PRIDE

The understanding of our dualist view, and of the vital struggle which is its consequence, enables us successfully to broach the question of human pride.

This self love is the dualist manifestation of the principle of absolute love. The one reality, immanent and transcendant principle of the cosmos, the source of all the conditioning phenomena, is itself *unconditioned*. Put in another way, the absolute wills itself, its being wills itself to be, and it is in this sense that it is absolute love. This love is the source, upstream, of all distinctions of 'subject-object', 'loving-loved'.

But, when this love manifests in man, the distinction 'subject-object' necessarily intervenes, since man identifies himself with one part of the cosmos, the part that we have called the 'I-reality'. In this identification, man is in part that which identifies itself and in another part that to which he is identified. In so far as he represents 'reality', man loves with a love from the source which is absolute; but this love, because of the fact that it is applied to a particular object incarnating the 'I-reality', ceases to be universal; thus man personalizes himself, he becomes proud. Furthermore, we can say that pride, love that man has for his 'I-reality', is the refraction, in his dualist view, of the absolute love.

Pride is my love of the 'I-reality' menaced by the 'Not-Self'; it is the wish to defend my 'reality' and to affirm it definitely against the 'menace'. During my vital combat I tend towards a victory for which I hope, which I place in the future; I claim that what is dear to me must exist absolutely, must never cease to exist. My pride is essentially a claim to the permanence of that which I see incarnated in my 'reality'. It is at the same time 'vanity' because it is in vain that I claim to destroy a 'menace' necessarily implied by my representation of myself. And we must understand well how this claim of my pride is unlimited. It does not appear unlimited in my manifest conflicts, since my manifest enemies are evidently limited and my claim to destroy them is consequently limited. But in the latent conflicts which uphold the manifest conflicts, the 'menace' that I claim to destroy is as unlimited as the 'reality' to which it is opposed. So my general claim, behind my particular claims, is without limit.

What we have just said can be surprising because of the limited meaning currently attributed to the word 'pride' and we must see why this meaning is thus limited. My claim to the permanence of my 'I-reality' appears in very different ways according to whether this 'I-reality' is represented by my organism, by my Self, or by dependents more or less distant from my Self. When my affirming claim concerns my organism (or things or beings that I possess), one says that I am pretentious, that I have pride. But one does not speak of pride if my affirming claim concerns an object that I do not possess, which is not an attribute of my person. One does not speak of pride when a man consecrates himself to the service of another being or of an ideal cause or of a supernatural image, when the 'I-reality' that this man loves and protects is incarnated in his eyes in a dependence distant from his organism. It is certain that these two appearances are very dissimilar, but behind them resides the same fundamental mechanism, the same love of 'I-reality', the same pride. The love of the mystic for his God is pride, even though this mystic inflicts on his organism, for the love of his God, the worst humiliations. The action by which I mortify my organism for the benefit of an object that I exalt and the action by which I glorify my organism, these two actions, in appearance so dissimilar, are both manifestations of my personal claim.

When we understand the real nature of our pride, our loves cease to appear to us as hateful or admirable according to whether or not they merit the customary word 'pride'. Pride ceases to be a fault. It is the only way in which we can love in our present condition. As such it is valuable, since our dualist condition is an evolutionary phase through which we have to pass. It acts in an illusory way, to be sure, but because of its origin it contains the germ of absolute love which will be possible to us one day, a true non-dualist love, a love without a subject or an object, a love not menaced. The metaphysical transformation must not be understood as the destruction of self-love, which would be replaced by humility. Humility is usually regarded as the forgetting of our organism in favour of an outside object with which we identify our 'I-reality'; in fact that is not humility, but only the projection of our Self. Humility is only realized when the view in which 'reality' is incarnated in opposition to a 'menace' disappears. It is only realized when, in the disappearance of this illusory view, we can at last accept the impermanence of all that exists.

THE VITAL CONFLICT OF THE 'WILL TO EXPERIENCE'

Let us see, to end this chapter, how our understanding of the vital conflict teaches us about the exact nature of the 'will to experience'. If we 'will to experience' whatever might be, it is always in order to incarnate in our manifest life the latent conflict between our 'I-reality' and the 'menace'. I want to vanquish the 'Not-Self' in a visible way; I need to meet my 'enemy' in an outside object which will represent it; I need to make contact with this hostile intention which I suppose is hovering over my 'reality'. I prefer obviously to prevail over my enemy by experiencing the joy and hope of happiness; but if I fail I much prefer to experience suffering and fear than to experience nothing at all. We have seen that the only eventuality which is absolutely intolerable is that of a Not-Self independent of a Self, existing by itself, and thus flouting the one reality. The 'will to experience' is the 'will to experience' at long last the hostility of the Not-Self in victory or defeat, in order to prove to ourselves that the Not-Self exists only in terms of the Self to which it is opposed.

In my conflict, whatever its issue might be, I escape intolerable '*solitude*', this solitude in which I would be if the Not-Self, by not appearing, seemed to exist parallel to me. Many men feel anguish when they say: 'Fundamentally each of us is alone'. They shudder, in face of an absence of love. In reality, in our dualist view, it is our 'enemy' that we cannot do without, it is a hostile resistance that we need in order not to feel ourselves as nothing. If, by some miracle, it were possible to confer omnipotence on dualistic man, taking from him all hope and all fear, this man would not be able to tolerate his life for one instant. Our 'will to experience' is our will to live the struggle of life, winning or losing.

CHAPTER 9

THE IDEA OF PERFECTION

In the course of the last chapter we sketched in outline the picture of the combat of human life. For the time being, in order to gain clarity in this, we had to leave in the shade certain aspects of the question, even those which are most characteristic of the 'human' creature. We can now describe these aspects without risk of confusion.

We have said that our 'I-reality' is not only represented by our organism, but also by all the things which are, for this organism, the occasion of its inner consonances, of its joys. But this is true also for the animal; this is not typically human. The animal, though it *has* not an Ego for lack of being able to conceive the intellectual idea of it, *is* however an Ego. If it is not an intellectual consciousness, it is, all the same, a psychological consciousness. Being an Ego, it has, like man, a dualist vision of the world, a vision bringing with it the dual, 'Self: Not-Self'. The life of an animal develops also in a predicament of conflict and the conflict equally has a latent aspect and a manifest aspect. The animal cannot be conscious of his latent conflict (while man can be conscious of it), but this general conflict exists all the same beneath all the particular conflicts that the animal sustains in its life. In these particular conflicts the Ego of the animal fights through the medium of things which represent it and those things are not only his own organism, but all that is associated with this organism through consonance. Thus we can understand that sometimes the animal struggles right up to death in favour of something other than its own existence, and that it can allow itself to die if it is separated from a being to which it was attached. Certain behaviour of rivalry, of jealousy, of prestige, observed among animals, would be incomprehensible if we were unaware of the existence of the latent conflict behind the manifest conflicts.

But human life differs from animal life from the moment when

man possesses generalizing intellect. A primary difference consists, we have just said, in that man can become aware of his latent conflict with the Not-Self. In this way, at the end of a complete intellectual development, man can liberate himself from his dualistic views and from the sufferings which he endures as a consequence. But this difference, although of capital importance, does not interest us for the moment, since we are studying man in his normal condition. The possibility of satori is the prerogative of man, but, as long as it has not been realized, it is not this possibility that will enable us to understand the way in which human life differs essentially from animal life.

There exists another difference which makes a special creature of man, and it is to that difference that we are going to address ourselves now. Thanks to intellect, man gains access to the general, universal plane. He does not lose, because of that, individual perceptions that he shares with animals, but he overflows the world of individual images and he evolves, likewise, in the world of universal images; also his organic resonances—consonance and dissonance—respond not only to all that makes the animal organism 'resonate', but to new and more subtle aspects of manifestation.

In so far as I resemble the animal, my organism 'resonates' to all that I see as favourable or unfavourable to my individual life. My consonances (my joys) correspond to all that favours the continual construction of my organism. Being individual Yang, I will my life; I see, as a consequence, all that favours my life as *having to be*, as *in the normal order of things*. Although my life consists in a constant rearrangement of my organism, I see, in an illusory way, the continuation of this rearrangement as a '*permanence*' and I see this permanence as '*in order*'. Conversely, all that tends to the destruction of my organism appears to me contrary to the normal order, '*disorderly*'; my disappearance seems to be to be an abnormal impermanence, opposed to the cosmic order.

In reality, phenomena do not bring any true permanence and nothing appears which does not disappear at the same instant; the real cosmic order which presides over the continuous creation of the world (absolute principle) consists in the balance between a constructive principle and a destructive principle, which are at

work everywhere at the same time; creation is simultaneous construction and destruction. Put in another way, the cosmic order manifests itself at the same time under two aspects, as constructive order and destructive order. But in so far as I am a living animal, I identify the cosmic order only with its constructive aspect and I see as 'disorder' the destructive aspect of this order. The continuation of my life appears to me as a permanence, opposed to its disappearance, and I see my permanence as 'conforming to the cosmic order' and my disappearance as 'contrary to the cosmic order'. In the depths of my psyche my permanent continuation is identified with Being, with the will of the cosmic mind, with the good, and my impermanence is identified with the nothingness, with the 'enemy' of the cosmic mind, with evil.

These identifications, 'permanence-order-good' and 'impermanence-disorder-evil', must be made very precise before grappling with the special organic resonances which characterize man. These identifications exist also among animals, but, for lack of intellect, they only act on the particular plane; permanence only interests the animal in what concerns his own organism (and from a rather restricted angle, his species). With man, on the contrary, the love of permanence stretches out far from his organism, into the sphere of the universal. The origin of this love of permanence resides fully in the animal life of man, in the experiences of his early childhood, but the development of the tree extends subsequently very far from its roots.

Right at the beginning I identified with order, with 'good' only the permanence of my organism, but to the degree that my intellect develops, this identification extends to permanence in general; I thus become receptive to everything in the world which manifests, by permanence, my conception of the cosmic order. I become receptive to the 'ideal', to the triad 'beauty-goodness-truth'.

Before describing the ideal resonances which are special to man, we must recall their illusory character. The illusion does not reside in the distinction we are going to make between beautiful and ugly, good and evil, true and false, but in the opposition of the concepts thus discriminated. The illusion resides in the identifications which pose the 'beautiful-good-true'

as conforming with the cosmic order and the 'ugly-wicked-false' as contrary to the cosmic order. In fact, the cosmic order in reality is not the 'beautiful-good-true', but the balance between the 'beautiful-good-true' and the 'ugly-wicked-false'.

The beautiful, the good and the true, are, all three, aspects of manifestation, that is to say of *forms*, which correspond to the different means of perception; the beautiful corresponds to sensory perception, the good to emotional perception and the true to intellectual perception. All these forms are tied together by the same idea of order (while their opposites are tied together by the same idea of disorder). All my ideal 'values' are incarnated in things which enable me to see the 'order' of the world just as I conceive it.

To understand truly the delicate question of our ideal resonances, we must remember that they prolong, at the universal level, the animal resonances that we experience at the individual level; to do this they must be constructed on the same model. Let us come back once more to our animal resonances and describe the identifying association which characterizes the structure of them. This 'home base' once established, we shall pursue our ascent with ease.

My perception of a thing favourable to my life, to the continuation of my existence, to my 'permanence', releases in my organism a consonant reaction; so, between the elements which enter into the constitution of my organism and the organism of which they are the integration, there is consonance, accord, convergent relation, harmony. Because of this internal consonance, I see the outer favourable thing as consonant with me, in a convergent relation, in harmony. I see this thing conform with the cosmic order; it is 'legitimate', it 'ought to be', I see it as 'good'.

When the world is favourable to me, my reaction thus demonstrates the existence in me of a complex association in which the following terms are identified: permanence of my organism—accord, harmony, convergent relation—order, legitimacy—that which ought to be—good. Conversely, when the world is unfavourable to me, my reaction demonstrates the existence in me of a complex association in which the following terms are identified: impermanence of my organism — discord, disharmony,

divergent relation — disorder, illegitimacy — that which ought not to be—evil.

It is now easy for us to understand our 'ideal' resonances, because what is true at the microcosmic level is also true at the macrocosmic level. When I perceive, among various aspects of the world, a convergent relation, an accord, a harmony, I perceive the permanence of the cosmos, order or cosmic legality, that which ought to be, the good. And I experience this harmony between various aspects of the world as a harmony between the world and me, as an internal harmony of my organism, as a personal consonance, as a joy.

On the contrary, when I perceive, among various aspects of the world, a divergent relation, a disharmony, I see there the impermanences of the cosmos, disorder or cosmic illegality, that which ought not to be, evil; I experience this disharmony between various aspects of the world as a personal dissonance, as a suffering.

Men differ one from the other by the forms through which they perceive the harmony of the universe; each one sees universal consonance through a set way of looking which is individual to him; one sees as beautiful what another sees as ugly. This statement can make us doubt the objective existence of harmonic and disharmonic relations between phenomena. This apparent difficulty comes from the habitual error by which we oppose, one to another, these terms of discrimination; discriminating between harmony and disharmony, we oppose them as if they 'were', in themselves, and we think that some part of the world *is* harmony and some other part *is* disharmony. If it were thus, all men would have to experience the same 'ideal' resonances. But in reality harmony and disharmony are present simultaneously in all aspects of the world; they are distinct, but not opposed; as antagonists they are at the same time complementaries, they are two inseparable aspects of the one reality. Cosmic harmony, a relation of convergence, corresponds to the law of gravity; cosmic disharmony corresponds to universal expansion. In every aspect of the world these two laws are simultaneously at work. Each aspect of the world is at the same time the expression of a consonance and of a dissonance. When I have the impression of beauty before the view of a mountainside, I perceive the harmony which is there, the force which makes all the elements of the countryside converge towards unity; but another man who accompanies me can have the impression of ugliness if he perceives the disharmony which is equally present, the force which makes all the elements of the countryside diverge towards disintegration.

This understanding does away with the illusory dilemma between subjective and objective concepts of aesthetics. To discuss whether universal beauty exists or not is vain. We can say that universal beauty and ugliness exist, but as they exist simultaneously everywhere, we cannot say that any individual thing is beautiful or ugly. The particular things in which men perceive the order of the universe on the one hand, and its disorder on the other, are different, but the order and disorder that men perceive through these different things are the same. Aesthetics obey a single universal law, although particular aesthetic objects manifest according to multiple individual laws.

Let us come back to the three modalities of the ideal: 'Beauty-goodness-truth'. I see beauty when I see cosmic harmony through sensory perception, goodness when I see this harmony through emotional perceptions, and truth when I see it through intellectual perceptions. Although the channels of perception differ in all cases, they end with the same impression of ideal or aesthetic organic consonance. It is correct to distinguish aesthetic proper from ethics and from knowledge, but these are only the modalities of a single general aesthetic: a vision of order in the universe, a vision of that which we call 'the Divine'. If we thus reunite these three modalities under the general term of aesthetics, it is because the idea of beauty sums up all our visions of order on the formal plane; a manifestation of goodness is for us a 'beautiful action'; and again it is an impression of beauty which we feel when we understand the truth of a scientific or philosophic text. And while we feel goodness and truth in some affective consonances, they are derivatives of beauty.

So I recognize the existence in me of two sorts of organic resonances. My organism 'resonates' on the one hand, with that which conditions its own order: joyous consonance before the things which favour my life and sorrowful dissonance before what is harmful to my life; those are my *animal resonances*. My

organism 'resonates', on the other hand, with that which manifests cosmic order in general: joyful consonance before 'beauty-goodness-truth', sorrowful dissonance before the 'ugly-wicked-false'; these are my *ideal or aesthetic resonances.*

Ideal resonances do not exist among animals, they are proper to man. With them appears the idea of '*perfection*'. We are going to show in fact that this idea of perfection, the knowledge of which is so important for the understanding of man, cannot exist in the sphere of animal resonances but only in that of 'ideal' resonances.

All consonance corresponds to the perception of what is for me the cosmic 'order' (constructive aspect of the real cosmic order). My animal consonance corresponds to my perception of order in my own organism (microcosm); my 'ideal' consonance corresponds to my perception of order in the outer world (macrocosm). I can intellectualize and raise my perception of my animal consonance to the universal plane, to the general plane, but this universalization necessarily remains incomplete; my organism is always there and must perceive its consonance on the individual particular plane. If I can perceive my organic joy with my intellectual consciousness (universal thought), I necessarily perceive it also with my animal consciousness (individual thought). If I can make my animal consciousness absolute, I can only make a part of it so; another part remains irreducibly relative. For lack of a pure 'absolutization', my animal consonance remains imperfect because perfection supposes a pure absolute. Therefore, in so far as I experience my animal resonances, I cannot perceive the idea of perfection since these resonances belong to a sphere which is necessarily imperfect. The idea of perfection is inaccessible to the psychological consciousness of the animal.

On the contrary, my perception of order in the outside world, in the universe, is situated, by its very nature, on the general plane. My ideal consonance is there made purely absolute and its perception resides on the plane on which the idea of perfection exists, since it is possible there. Here we should recall that on the general plane, in opposition to the particular plane, all that is possible exists. None of my ideal consonances is perfect, but the domain of these consonances contains the idea of perfection as a

centre around which they are ordered. When popular wisdom says that perfection is not of this world, it is right in this sense: that the idea of perfection cannot be incarnated in a definite way, to our eyes, in any aspect of the universe; but it is wrong in confusing the definite incarnation of perfection with the very idea of perfection. This idea is certainly in the world, since it rules all human life in so far as it is typically human. Perfection cannot be perceived by our mind outside of itself, but it resides at the centre of our mind and it is in terms of it that we perceive and evaluate all our 'ideal' resonances. It is our criterion, our measure; our ideal resonances appear to us as more or less perfect. Perfection, of which we have the idea, although it never totally manifests itself, manifests itself to our eyes, more or less, in phenomena; phenomena seem to us more or less absolute to the degree that they manifest for us the constructive aspect of the cosmic order.

Perfection, as we conceive the idea of it, consists in the *pure* manifestation of the constructive cosmic order. We have seen earlier that the real cosmic order has two aspects. In our affective scheme of things the positive aspect is identified with the cosmic order and the negative aspect appears from then on as disorder. In each part of the cosmos, for a given man, the respective manifestation of order and of disorder are of unequal importance. When I look at a part of the cosmos, I see there more or less of the positive and more or less of the negative; the more I see of the positive the nearer to perfection it appears. In all, perfection is for me pure cosmic construction, pure positivity. Searching for perfection, I seek a part of the world where the positive alone is manifest, without a shadow of the negative (we will see later how I sometimes find it, although in reality the destructive order of the cosmos is not absent from any part of it). This pure and perfect 'positivity' we can also call the 'divine', since, in our affective scheme of things, the absolute principle is identified with its positive aspect and the result of this identification is called 'God'. It must not surprise us, therefore, if man finds, in the most striking aspects of beauty, of goodness, of truth, the 'proofs' of the existence of God.

Thanks to the idea of perfection, man can satisfy the need that he has to *judge*. This need is inherent in intellectual

consciousness; the intellect, in naming things, makes of them apparent entities, it makes them objective, it creates an objective world in the midst of which it must then evolve. This world that my intellect creates would be a vertiginous chaos if an order did not 'position' the objects which compose it in relation with each other. The idea of perfection makes possible the ordering of my objectivized world; thanks to this criterion, I can evaluate things in an 'objective' way. It is evident that this objectivity is not absolute, that it is relative to my personal structure, to the possibilities that I have of perceiving the cosmic 'order'. But my judgments are 'objective' for me; I decree, not that something is convenient to me, but that it is 'good' in itself, that it should exist, and that it should exist and is good to the degree that I see it as 'positive', participating in the pure 'positivity', in perfection.

One could say that comparison among things is sufficient to position them. But the order that I would obtain in this way would only be an order of personal preference in which each object considered in itself would remain without a precise value, whereas, in fact, my intellect objectivizes each object as an entity and feels the need to evaluate it without taking another as a means of comparison; only an absolute term of comparison is necessary and my intellect finds it in the idea of perfection. Perfection is the 'ultima ratio' without which my imaginative world would founder.

The existence of the idea of perfection at the centre of the human intellect has considerable consequences in all of our psychology. To broach this question we must come back to the birth of the idea of Self. When we spoke of 'I', in connection with the combat of human life, we could only do so in a rough way, for lack of certain ideas whose exposition would have been premature. We can now return to this 'I' and give it the necessary precision.

We have seen that, thanks to the intellect, man conceives the idea of his Self. This puts an end, from then on, to his identification with his organism; his organism becomes an 'object' for him. But man only separates from his Self by naming it and this 'holding' of formal consciousness implies an inevitable identification with the idea of Self, and with the Self itself, in so far as it

is the necessary support for his idea. So, we might say, the 'I-reality' of man is going to be represented originally by his own organism and, secondarily, by all the things to which the idea of his Self is identified by projection.

All this is true in the main, but only in the main, because a confusion still exists in the concept represented by the word 'organism'. In fact, from the moment in which I am intellectual consciousness, creating general concepts, acting as a principle of all the cosmic manifestations that I perceive, my organism offers two aspects that we must distinguish: it exists in one way, as a necessary support to my intellectual consciousness, in so far as it thinks intellectually, and it exists in another way in so far as it is manifested as an object for my intellectual consciousness.

In so far as my organism supports my formal intellectual consciousness, it is this consciousness; that is to say that it is the principle of all that exists for me. In so far as it is an object perceived by my intellectual consciousness, it is simply a part, among others, of the universal manifestation. We will call these two aspects of my organism, for the sake of simplicity, 'organism as principle' and 'organism as manifestation'. My organism as principle of my formal intellectual consciousness is a unity without fixed form; my organism as manifestation is, on the contrary, the multitude of gross and subtle forms (soma and psyche or imaginative world) through which I am manifested.

Thanks to this distinction, we can better understand how the conception of the idea of the Self disidentifies us from our organism and seems at the same time to re-identify us with it. In conceiving the idea 'Self', I distinguish myself from my organism as principle, from my organism in so far as it supports or conditions in me the operation of the mind. This identification is the original or fundamental identification which, by projection, will engender all my secondary identifications with other things in the world. Among these 'other things', my organism as manifestation will find its place for the same reason as any other aspect of manifestation. Put in another way, my original attachment is attachment to my organism in so far as I identify it with the principle of the mind in me, in so far as I have need of it in order to create the world that I perceive; my secondary

attachments are attachments to all sorts of things (among which is my organism as manifestation) which please me by virtue of animal or of 'ideal' consonances. My original love for the principle of my consciousness engenders all my loves and my hates for things, amongst which is my organism. Thus we can understand that a man might, for love of his organism as principle, kill his organism as manifestation if the latter is considered too displeasing (suicide through disgust with himself).

My organism as manifestation is not, then, a part of my original identification and it is present as my secondary identification in the same way as any other part of the cosmos. It differs, however, from the rest of the cosmos in this way: that, of all possible objects, it is the only one which unavoidably obtrudes itself for my consideration, because of its close connection with my organism as principle. Because it is in a way the temple of my mind, I cannot neglect it nor get away from it. Whether I will it or no, it constantly forms a part of the world that my intellect creates and which I must organise by judgment. Furthermore, man is constantly occupied, implicitly or explicitly, by the question of the 'value' of his manifested Self, that is to say by his inner 'trial'.

I evaluate myself by comparison, either with others or with the idea of perfection. The comparison with others is most often made in an explicit way; that is why I fairly easily succeed in being content on the surface. But the comparison with perfection always operates in my 'subconscious' and this is why in the depths of me I can never be definitely acquitted.

This judgment of my manifested Self does not carry over to the indefinite multitude of psychic and somatic aspects of this Self. As I need to see 'value' in myself, I define myself essentially by the faculties that I see as 'perfectible' in me and I neglect the others. I isolate my unreasonable demands to the sphere of faculties where I can find hope. Given the 'absolute' character of perfection, it would be sufficient if I were to attain it through a single aspect of myself, however small it might be, and for me thus to see myself 'saved'. This search for perfection in one aspect or another of the manifested Self explains one characteristic of the human being, his 'excessiveness'. Man is excessive in his ambitions. his hopes, his glorifications of himself and also in his abasements, his resignations, his fears; excessive fear is human anguish.

One sees how the existence in me of the 'ideal' resonance necessarily introduces a contradiction in the middle of my affective life. I am capable of conceiving the idea of perfection and I am constrained from then on to reach out towards it; I am on the other hand constrained to organize my manifest Self in relation to this perfection and, as a consequence, to use this Self in my search for the perfect. Thus my organism as manifestation becomes for me simply a means, an instrument which I use. As this instrument always disappoints my unreasonable demands, my search for a perfect organic consonance establishes in me an unavoidable dissonance. In all, the way in which I search for perfect consonance inevitably implies that I must come to dissonance; the problem of happiness is insoluble.

CHAPTER 10

THE INNER LACERATIONS OF MAN

We said, in studying the three cosmic planes, that the transition from the animal world to man was characterized by the appearance of language. Then we saw, in the 'ideal' organic resonances, another prerogative of the human being. It is important to understand, now, how the difference existing between man and animals is at the same time single and multiple, *single in its principle and multiple in its manifestations.*

Let us see first that it is single in its principle. As the child grows up, language and 'ideal' resonances appear and develop in him. But, since these functions appear in the infant and not in the animal, it is evident that this supposes in the human being, behind these functions, 'something special' which is its principle. This 'something special' is the possibility of gaining access to the universal plane, it is the knowledge of this plane.

The difference between the living animal and the inanimate world consists in the possibility of the animal gaining access to the individual plane, in the knowledge that it has of itself and of its relations with the things which surround it, that is to say in the animal or individual consciousness. The difference between man and the animal consists in the possibility of man's gaining access to the universal plane, in knowledge that man can have of the relations existing between the 'ten thousand things', in universal consciousness. Without losing the individual consciousness that he shares with animals, man also possesses universal consciousness. This consciousness, which constitutes the only 'essential' difference between man and animal, is the 'principle' of this difference; we must not confuse it with its manifestations.

When individual consciousness appears in animal and vegetable life, it makes a radical distinction between all living organisms and the inanimate world; it appears in an abrupt way and is considered as the principle of 'life'. There is a hiatus, a

jump, between inanimate things and the most simple living creature. All the gradations which appear afterwards in the living world are not gradations of the vital principle, but only of its manifestation. The earthworm and the dog differ equally from the inanimate world in that they are living; if life appears so differently in one from the way it appears in the other, it is not a *difference of life*, but of the *manifestations* of life.

In the same way, there is a sudden jump between the animal and man with the appearance of universal consciousness. The congenital idiot and the man of genius differ equally from the animal world in that they are men; if human nature appears in one so differently from the way it appears in the other it is not a difference of *human nature*, but of the *manifestation* of human nature. A gifted man is not more or less a man, he only manifests, more or less, the human prerogatives. In the same way that there exists, in the animal-vegetable world, an immense gradation of individual consciousness in so far as it is manifest, there also exists in men an immense gradation of the universal consciousness in so far as it is manifest.

This having been well established, we can study the characteristic functions of the human being, his varied manifestations, which are variously developed, and the universal consciousness which is the single principle of the human essence.

Universal consciousness manifests itself by knowledge of the universal, while individual or animal consciousness manifests itself by the knowledge of the individual, by the perception of individual forms. How can we understand the difference between individual and universal forms? Individual forms are multiple, they are the forms of each of the 'ten thousand things'; universal forms, on the contrary, are only two in number; these are the relations, convergence and divergence, which we have spoken of in connection with our 'ideal' resonances; these are harmony and disharmony manifested in individual forms.

As this is rather a fine point, we should develop it a little. All form is a totality of relations, an individual form is a totality of individual relations. I distinguish a straight line from a curve by perceiving the existing relations between the points which are to be found there. These individual relations lie at the particular

level. At the universal level there exist two relations manifesting the laws of gravity and universal expansion, these are the relations of convergence and divergence, of harmony and disharmony.

Through my animal consciousness I have knowledge of the multiple individual forms; through my universal consciousness I have knowledge of the two universal forms. I can look in two different ways at some man who is standing in front of me: I can look at him in such a way as to be able to recognize him if I meet him again; what I do then, the animal does also. But I can look at him in order to evaluate him aesthetically and I then see in him some beautiful aspects and some ugly aspects. In the first case I have perceived the individual relations of the various elements which are in this man. In the second case I perceive the two general forms of harmony and disharmony which are the universal relations existing in individual forms.

Universal consciousness is manifest then in man by the perception of the universal forms of harmony and disharmony. But man carries out these two ways of perceiving in two ways, either through the intermediary of his sense organs, or, without this intermediary, directly, through the mind. Universal sensory perceptions correspond to the 'ideal' or aesthetic resonances. Pure mental, universal, perceptions correspond to the verbal intellect. It is easy to recognize harmony and disharmony in the play of 'ideal' sensory perceptions; it is less so in the play of the verbal intellect. In fact, all intellectual perception is harmony since it supposes the convergent, harmonic relationship between the word and the thing that the word symbolizes. Disharmony does not exist positively in the play of the intellect; it is present negatively to the degree that the intellect does not play its part, to the degree that the intellect does not perceive the harmonic relationship between a thing and a word. While, in sensory perception, there is the beautiful and the ugly, one cannot say that in intellectual perception there is truth and error. Error, or intellectual disharmony, does not exist positively; there is only insufficiency of truth, of discrimination, that is to say of harmony. The intellect is comparable to an eye whose function is not to see beauty and ugliness, but only to see a necessary harmony, and which does or does not attain to this, which, in other words, attains to it more or less. The intellect does not evaluate, it discriminates. In the play of the intellect disharmony cannot be perceived; it is represented in this domain by the non-functioning of discrimination, by confusion, by false identifications. While the senses distinguish convergence and divergence in sensory forms, the intellect succeeds or fails to distinguish the harmonic convergence among the intellectual forms which alone reigns there.

We see then that universal consciousness manifests in two ways: by 'ideal' sensory perceptions on one side and intellectual perceptions on the other. We have just seen the passive or receptive aspect of these two manifestations; they have also an active or creative aspect. I can reconstruct the sensory universal forms to my liking—this is artistic creation; and I can reconstruct the intellectual forms that I perceive by means of scientific or philosophic creations (which are not two different creations because philosophy is the science of the psyche of man).

In all, the manifestations characteristic of the human being consist in one part of his ideal sensory perceptions and creations and in the other of his intellectual perceptions and creations. These manifestations are very unequally developed among different men; each of us is born with very varied possibilities of perception and of intellectual and artistic creation. It would be possible on this basis to create a characterology of human beings. But this is not our present aim and we will limit ourselves to studying how the development of sensitivity to the 'ideal' conditions the way in which man sees and conducts the combat of his life.

When we observe the behaviour and psychology of men (this word of course is to be taken in the general sense of 'human beings'), we ascertain immense differences in the adaptation of these men to reality, and in particular to social life. We are going to show that this adaptation depends essentially on our sensitivity to the 'ideal': *the more intensely this human prerogative is developed the more difficult is our adaptation.* For this demonstration we must proceed in a schematic way by describing, in a supposed subject, the consequences of a sensitivity to the 'ideal' which is extremely developed. We will describe thus a 'prototype' which does not, of course, exist as such in reality, but

which will enable us to recognize, among real existing men, the mechanisms inherent in their particular sensitivity to the 'ideal'. Furthermore, our present aim is not to make a psychological analysis, but to show how our dualistic view, 'Self: Not-Self' establishes a contradiction in us—an absurdity—which increases the more we participate in the 'superior' prerogatives of man.

The man whose sensitivity to the 'ideal' is extremely developed, in whom the 'ideal' resonances are intense, knows violently contrasting organic states of joyous exaltation and anxious depression. His affective world is made up of peaks and precipices, of high plateaux and low plains. He knows also middle levels; what characterizes him is not so much vibrating ceaselessly in an exacerbated way, but being able to do so and to do so during lengths of time.

Let us see what happens in this man when his 'ideal' resonances 'are at their heights' of harmony or disharmony, at the time of his 'ecstasies' and of his 'horrors'. If I am gifted with an extreme sensitivity to the 'ideal', I sometimes experience ecstasy or the 'feeling of the divine'. At these moments I perceive the pure universal positivity. This may appear surprising since, as the two universal forms of harmony and disharmony co-exist at all points of the cosmos, harmony exists nowhere in the state of purity. But, although harmony does not exist anywhere in the pure state, I can in certain cases perceive nothing but harmony. This comes about when certain aspects of an object[1] appear to me to be carriers of a harmony attaining or surpassing a very high degree. From this point of view, which constitutes a sort of 'threshold', the harmony that I perceive fascinates me; it captivates my attention to such a point that it immobilizes my attention. Thus immobilized, fixed on the harmony apparent in the object, my attention is unable to move on to the disharmony which, without this phenomenon of fascination, would be equally apparent in the object. I can perceive some aspects which I know would normally be unpleasant to me; that is to say that I can clearly see the 'faults' of the adored object; but I do not experience them as such. I can see the disharmonic aspects, but not the disharmony itself, because my attention is immobilized on harmony. In this state I am only sensitive to harmony; the half of my being which corresponds to contrary perceptions is asleep. It is as if my arm, for example, were anaesthesatized and someone came and pushed a needle into it; I understand that it is a phenomenon which is normally painful, but I do not feel it as such. Since I only experience harmony in perceiving the object, I see it affectively as a pure positivity, as the 'divine', as the perfect incarnation of the 'I-reality'. The identifying projection of the 'I' is complete at this moment; the contemplative perception of the object gives me the impression of seizing my 'I-reality' in a union in which my fundamental dualism is resolved; my dualistic perception does not bring with it an 'I-reality' and a 'menace', but an 'I' perceiving and an 'I' perceived; the menace is temporarily abolished. This perception of the 'divine' is expressed by the most acute joy that is possible to me in my dualist condition. But this joy, although I experience it in an impression of perfection, is not itself perfect, since the 'I' perceiving and the 'I' perceived are one single person, and because their illusory union would not be able to be totally accomplished without abolishing the person. Those who are very well endowed for perceiving the divine know well this moment when their joy becomes difficult to support because it seems to drag them towards an abyss; they must then turn their attention away for a moment to break the giddy attraction.

[1] This word object does not necessarily denote an existing material object. It can be the mental image of a situation that I am in the process of living, or an image created entirely by my mind. In any case, it is an *image*, upheld or not by external reality.

The other extreme pole of my 'ideal' resonances can be called 'horror' or the 'feeling of nothingness'. This dissonance is produced when certain aspects of an object (in general, a situation) appear to me to be carriers of disharmony attaining or surpassing a threshold. Then this disharmony fascinates me; it immobilises my attention and sends to sleep the half of my being which responds to harmonious perceptions. I experience the object as pure negativity, as 'nothingness', as the perfect incarnation of the 'menace'. The identifying projection of the 'I' is annulled at that moment; my dualistic perception of a subject menaced and a menacing object is at its height. This perception of 'nothingness' is accompanied by the most acute suffering which is possible to me. But here again my dissonance cannot be perfect; if

it were so I should die of it (certain men have died of horror), and it would thus be abolished. Certain defence mechanisms protect us from this ultimate escape; madness can be one, swooning another; most often an extreme mental agitation is produced in which my attention is torn away from the horrible perception and comes back to it in rapid alternations which preserve my reason and my life. Adults often develop even more efficacious defence mechanisms, but it is in children that 'horror' is released in its most typical way (terrors of the 'wolf', of darkness, of the ill-natured anger of its parents, etc.). The adult has often learned unconsciously to inhibit his perceptions of horror; when a situation would be too horrible for him he experiences nothing and only begins to suffer when a certain time has blunted his 'ideal' dissonance.

This brief description of 'ecstasy' and 'horror' was necessary before studying the repercussions of the sensitivity to the 'ideal' in our adaptation to life. There is a strict relationship which in fact ties the ideal resonance to the dilemma 'success-failure'. We have seen that man claims the triumph of his 'I-reality' over the 'menace'; that is to say that he claims all powerfulness in the manifest conflicts in which he acts out his latent conflict. This pretension would be incomprehensible unless it were known that man himself organizes the scenarios which transpose his latent conflicts into manifest reality. It is not a case of my being truly all-powerful as an organism in opposition to the outside world, but of obtaining an artificially contrived vision in which I appear to myself as all-powerful in a scenario that I construct. Success is a circumstance in which I reach the point of seeing myself as if I were all-powerful; failure is a circumstance in which I do not reach this point although I had aspired to it. This must be clearly established and we must not confuse practical failure with psychological failure; if I fail in a competition in which I had not inwardly aspired to succeed, this practical failure is not a psychological failure; I do not see in it my non-all-powerfulness. The dilemma 'success-failure' only exists for me to the degree that I inwardly aspire to succeed; to the extent that I have transposed my latent conflict into the manifest conflict. When we speak of success or failure without further qualification we shall refer, not to their practical form, but to their psychological form, to that which I see as my success and that which I am obliged to see as my failure.

Thus understood, my success is the vision of myself as all-powerful and it appears to me to be 'in the order of things'; it manifests to my eyes the harmony of the cosmos, since the affirmation of the 'I-reality', which is the centre of my world, is, for me, cosmic convergence. My failure, on the contrary, is the vision of myself as powerless; it appears to me to be disorder; it manifests to my eyes the disharmony of the cosmos, since the negation of the 'I-reality' is, for me, cosmic divergence. As a consequence, my success is accompanied by an 'ideal consonance' and my failure by an 'ideal dissonance'.

The man in whom the sensitivity to the ideal is average can tolerate in himself the threshold in which fascination is released and as a consequence there is no horror. But if my sensitivity to the ideal is extreme, the vision of my failure is intolerable to me because, instead of remaining, it becomes a vision of nothingness. What one calls 'fear of failure' is not that which makes me fail practically, nor the fear of my failure in itself, it is the fear of the inner 'horrible' state, it is the fear of 'nothingness'.

At this point in our exposition the man gifted with extreme sensitivity to the 'ideal' may appear to us as incapable of making any effort with a view to affirming himself because, as soon as he makes such an effort, he will make his claim to succeed and will find himself thus before the intolerable eventuality of failure. It is not so, however, and we shall understand this when we have distinguished between the various ways in which our manifest conflicts can present themselves.

A primary distinction must be made: my adversary—that which represents the resistance that I aspire to overcome—can be another man, or, on the other hand, a non-human object. These two cases are entirely different. The only failure which can bring me the horrible vision of 'nothingness' is the failure that another human being, another universal consciousness, can inflict on me; indeed, the situation in which I confront another human consciousness is the only one which brings the necessary parity for the competition to judge me negatively in my wholeness. The judgment which comes from the struggle is based on a comparison: one will be superior and the other inferior; but the

comparison can only end in a judgment denying all my 'being' if my adversary is similar to me. For the fighter who struggles to throw a young bull by the horns and who fails to master the beast, there is a practical failure, but not a psychological failure; there is a negation of his muscular strength, but not a negation of his 'being'. If I attack some mountain and do not succeed in climbing it, I do not feel myself 'made nothing of' by this; I can feel myself 'made nothing of', on the other hand, if I have aspired, in succeeding in this ascent, to equal or to outclass other mountaineers; in the first case I have only confronted a mountain, in the second I have confronted other men with whom a total comparison is possible. All affirming undertakings being a 'gamble', we can say that the only gambles in which we risk coming up against the vision of our 'nothingness' are those that we make with others similar to us.

A second distinction intervenes now. The dreadful gamble is always undertaken with another man; but the performance which is the object of the gamble unfolds nearer to or further from the consciousness of my judges. If I enter a competition and I write an article, I struggle against other men, but the consciousness of my judges is far away; my fear of failure is able to be moderated because of this distance. If I make an oral exposition, the consciousness of my judges is closer and my fear is greater; however, this foreign consciousness is still separated from mine by the impersonal rules of the competition. The situation which brings the greatest fear, because of the fact that the consciousness of the other is in immediate contact with mine, is the direct struggle, the dispute, in which my adversary overtly manifests his hostility. This situation is intolerable to me, practically impossible to bear, if I am of an extreme sensitivity to the 'ideal'; I can live through certain oppositions to others while the hostility is not evident, but as soon as reciprocal hostility is declared, the gamble engages all my 'being' and places me before the horrible spectre of my eventual 'nothingness'. One could object that such a situation also places me before an eventual success and that this should balance the situation. But there is not really a true balance; indeed this possibility that I might win appears to me limited, since I am going to have to devote efforts to do so, whereas my possible failure appears complete. The

dilemma is unequal; success promises me a limited affirmation and failure a complete negation. Under these conditions I can only consider the eventual failure and the fear of this failure alone reigns within me.

If I am endowed with an extreme sensitivity towards the 'ideal', I can conduct all sorts of struggles in which the adversary that resists me is not a human consciousness; I can conduct equally, up to a certain point, struggles in which I am opposed to those similar to me, if these struggles are 'civilized', of the sort from which hate can be apparently absent. But I cannot engage in any struggle in which there is a risk of reciprocally bad intentions becoming evident. This sort of struggle inspires in me a veritable terror, a terror which is not of my adversary, not of the eventual failure itself, but of the 'nothingness' which appears in the failure which my efforts would not be able to avoid; a terror, in other words, of my non-all-powerfulness. If such a struggle is proposed to me, I find myself incapable of taking up the challenge because I *cannot choose to struggle*; I see this struggle as my 'nothingness' and I cannot choose my 'nothingness'. Thus I am disarmed in the face of the 'menace'.

The fact of being disarmed, before all situations of direct conflict with others, has numerous consequences in my inner and outer behaviour. My attitude towards others similar to me is necessarily *pacific*; I seek to avoid all conflict, to resolve all differences by friendly explanations. I need to be liked, not in order to be liked, but because this situation protects me against the eventual hostility; I seek to please in order to conciliate the 'other', in order to neutralize in him the enemy which he may be concealing. But this need to please is a make-shift. What pleases me most is solitude, the absence of this other, and I can never know that this is what I want if he does not incite me to unacceptable hostility. Seduction brings with it a risk because, if the other loves me, she will perhaps make unreasonable claims and her love might be reversed; so I have a fear of being loved, while at the same time I wish for it in order to protect myself from being hated. I need to be irreproachable, as far as others are concerned, because all damage inflicted by me risks unleashing war that I cannot confront. I need to be sincere; if I try to lie I have the impression that others will sense it and others will

get ready for reprisals to which I would not be able to reply.

Being thus pacific, because defenceless in the face of an eventual dispute, I clearly have recourse, in the combat of life, to a *defensive* tactic. I await the possible hostility; I will only defend myself, when it comes, by trying to disarm my adversary or by running away. I affirm myself in the enterprises which are possible for me and I try to ensure for myself a prestige which discourages hostility and which should make me 'respected'. To this defensive attitude, passive and anxious, correspond 'guilt feelings'; in the face of hostility, which always remains possible in spite of my efforts, I wonder what I have done to merit this menace; I have the impression, confused but often poignant, that I must have made myself guilty in some way or another. (The man who can on the contrary tolerate open hostilities with others has not this feeling; feeling himself ready to give blow for blow, and even of taking the initiative in the tussle, this man does not see any mystery in animosity towards others; he does not have to analyze himself about an enigmatic 'guilt'). Satisfactions and pleasures often increase the feeling of guilt; I feel the fact of enjoying the outside world, of eating it, as an imprudent provocation on my part. The 'painful' efforts that I am able to make, on the contrary, diminish my 'guilt', they reassure me (this is the appeasement of the "accomplished duty"). Only the 'ideal joys' are sweet to me, and in particular the perception of the 'divine' which abolishes the 'menace' and absolves me completely while it lasts.

According to whether the struggle of life does or does not bring me into opposition to those similar to me in an avowed hostility, it presents itself as a *war* or as a *participation*. The man gifted with a high sensitivity towards the 'ideal' cannot conduct the struggles of the *warrior life*, but he can conduct sometimes with great courage the life of participation. The 'castration complex' of the psycho-analysts only afflicts him in the face of war; but he is in no way deprived of his aggression when it is necessary for him to struggle against material opposition or against his own inertia in favour of some constructive work. The great artists, the great thinkers, the great savants, are recruited from among the men that hate finds defenceless by their terror of 'nothingness'.

But, all in all, adaptation to life is rendered difficult by sensitivity towards the 'ideal'. Men provided with this terrible gift are not always capable of sublimating their aggressiveness in original creations. Those who do not attain to this remain more or less seriously 'maladjusted'. The acuteness of their need for affirmation constitutes an enormous obstacle on the very road to this affirmation. Their eminent human dignity rebounds on to them; they are enemies of themselves. The 'superiority' of this 'superior animal' man, makes him, in the dualistic perspective of the cosmos, a strange creature; if his sensitivity towards the ideal is weak he is frequently vicious; if it is strong he is internally tormented.

CHAPTER 11

THE ILLUSORY 'ENIGMA' OF DEATH

We are going to examine now the structure of the human being in its totality and we will help ourselves in doing so by certain reflections on the illusory 'enigma' of death.

The knowledge of the three cosmic planes enables us to understand how it is that man is at the same time triple and one. My single organism manifests the cosmic mind in these three planes at the same time; it manifests it first of all as the totality of inanimate things entering into its constitution, then as a living integration of these inanimate things and finally as intellect capable of acceding to the universal plane.

I would be seriously mistaken if I said my organism is *formed of three parts*. This expression would imply in fact the juxtaposition of three entities entirely distinct, existing independently of one another. I am not made of three parts; *my three essences —inanimate, animate and intellectual—are not three entities, but three dynamisms, three energy systems (or vibrations) creating together a single organism*. The inanimate elements in the constitution of my organism—what is currently called the 'matter' of which my body is made—are not homogeneous and immobile substances; their atoms move ceaselessly; my inanimate essence is an elemental dynamism, acting on the plane of elemental Yin and Yang. My animal essence is an individual dynamism, acting on the plane of individualized Yang. My intellectual essence is a universal dynamism, acting on the plane of general Yin and Yang.

The three cosmic planes constitute the manifestation of the cosmic mind and we have seen in what sense one can say: 'All is mind'. Thus my three essences are three sorts of thoughts. My inanimate essence is elemental thought; it knows the elemental world. My animal essence is individual thought; it knows the individual world; at this level thought must be called 'consciousness', since it is thought of integration and since it constitutes

the integration of all my elemental thoughts; it is my animal or individual consciousness. Finally my intellectual essence is universal thought; it knows the two universal forms of cosmic harmony and disharmony.

Though my three dynamic essences are not three entities existing independently of one another, though they are not entirely distinct, a certain distinction does, however, exist between them. Their relation must be seen with exactness if one wishes to understand the 'dynamic' anatomy of man.

The best way of expressing this relation is to say that *the manifestations of my three essences are interdependent*. If I said simply that my three essences are interdependent, that would suggest that these three systems depend on each other as they are in themselves, that their relation is a *causal* relation, that the phenomena of the one is the origin of the phenomena of the other. This would be mistaken. In fact, my essences are all manifestations of the cosmic mind; they manifest this same and single mind on three different planes. Each of my three essences has its origin in the same source; each one is an outlet of this source independent of the other two. It is not therefore in the way that they originate that they depend upon each other; the relation of interdependence does not exist between the principles of my three essences (single absolute principle), but only between their manifestations.

The interdependence existing between the manifestation of my three essences expresses itself in different ways, in the upward direction and the downward direction. Let us see it first in the upward direction. If I receive a very violent blow on the head, the manifestations of my animal and intellectual consciousness disappear. This fact shows that the physical state of my brain (elemental essence) conditions the functioning of my animal and intellectual essences. More simply still, it is evident that no manifest life, as integration of inanimate elements, is conceivable without the inanimate elements to integrate. And no manifested intellectual consciousness can be conceived without a human animal gifted with a living brain; the action of language and of the 'ideal' resonances supposes the action of sensory perception. The manifestation of my elemental essence, then, conditions that of my animal essence; and the manifestations

of my elemental animal essences condition that of my intellectual essence. On the other hand, in the downward direction, it is easy to ascertain that some ideal resonance (manifestation of my intellectual essence) can release in me physiological phenomena and physiochemical modifications (manifestations of my animal and elemental essences). The manifestations of my three essences condition each other from lower to higher and from higher to lower in this hierarchy; they are truly interdependent.

By virtue of this interdependence, my three dynamic essences act simultaneously at each point of my organism. I have not three bodies, a 'material' body, an 'astral' body and a 'mental' body; *I have one single body which manifests, at the same time, the three dynamic planes of the cosmos.* However, the fact that my body exists in the world of inanimate things without either animal or intellectual consciousness, and in the animal world without intellectual consciousness, certainly shows us that a certain distinction must be made between the simultaneous manifestations of my three essences. In so far as I am manifested, I am at the same time three and one.

For lack of the understanding that our three essences are independent in their origin and interdependent in their manifestations, men have built, according to their own disposition, incomplete theories. The 'materialist' theory certainly sees the unity of our organism, but it fails to see the triad in the unity. In this theory the three essences are reduced to the one single elemental essence; man is only a totality of physiochemical phenomena. The 'spiritualist' theories distinguish correctly between the three essences, but they fail to see the unity of the human structure; they conceive man as being formed of two or three entirely distinct parts and designate these three parts as autonomous entities; they refer to the 'body and the soul' or else the 'body', the 'soul' and the 'spirit'. In this view, which creates illusory entities, the essences of man appear juxtaposed and capable of coming apart: the personal 'soul' inhabits the 'body' as a man inhabits his house and it can leave this habitation, after death, without being affected by this separation.

We find here again the fantastic representation that man has made of his 'Self', the idea of a 'person' at the same time individual—formal—temporal and universal—informal—intemporal. Instead of seeing himself as universal principle on the one hand and triple manifestation on the other hand, man manufactures a chaotic representation in which all these ideas are confused, and in which he sees himself absolute-in-so-far-as-he-is-particular. From this representation proceeds the illusory 'problem' of death.

THE 'PROBLEM' OF DEATH

The 'problem' of death is, for each of us, the problem of his own death. I recognize the death of others; I know that all men are dead, are dying, or will die and I logically conclude from this that I will die. It is about myself, after all, that I am concerned. The death of a being dear to me can plunge me into stupefaction and pose an agonizing question: this being was here just now and suddenly is not here any longer. But I am concerned about the disappearance of a being to which I was more or less identified. This death amputates a part of my own being, it kills the part that was living in me by the life of the other. The death which thus kills me partially and forcefully evokes the 'menace' hovering over my 'I-reality'. In spite of appearances, the stupor which seizes me in face of the death of a being that I love is only a stupor in the face of the eventual cessation of my own life.

When I am present at the death of another, I only observe that the functions of his organism stop and I know that this organism, in so far as it was made of certain inanimate elements, decomposes. This instructs me on the 'corporal' aspect of my future death, but not on my death in its totality because, as we have seen, I do not identify my Self with my organism as manifestation, but with my organism as principle, with my organism in so far as it presides at the existence of all that I perceive. To know what will become of my body is not to know what will become of 'Me'.

When man imagines to himself the disappearance of his normal manifestations he sees their principle as persisting. But at the same time he represents this principle to himself, he personalizes it. The 'Self' as principle, conceived in opposition to the organism as manifest, remains endowed with an individuality; conceived in opposition to form, it is affected by a personalization which leaves it in the formal domain. Man has

posed his 'Self' in opposition to the spatio-temporal limitations of his body, but in such a way that later he can only think about it to himself in terms of space and time. He distinguishes in himself a temporal part and an intemporal part; but as soon as he turns to this intemporal part he is incapable of representing it to himself as intemporal and sees it only as endowed with a perpetual duration; eternity without beginning or end, out of time, is transformed into a perpetuity which has had a beginning and whose end is only pushed back into infinity. And space is encountered again in quite an inevitable way in the common representation of death. In this view man cannot think of his 'Self' after death without at least a minimum of spatial representation. The 'soul', if such is the name given to this intemporal part, leaves the body and *goes* here or there; however imprecise this space imagined after death might be, it is none the less space. And man asks himself: 'Where do we go after death?'

Thus the 'indestructible part' of man is conceived by common sense, in spite of the revolt against temporal limitations which has given birth to this image, as belonging to the spatio-temporal world and depending on it. However, in the spatio-temporal world that our senses perceive, nothing is indestructible. Thus man is necessarily led to conceive the existence of *another world*; and he can only represent this other world to himself as a modification of what he knows. It is a stable world, where nothing appears and nothing disappears, either completely pleasant ('paradise') or completely unpleasant ('hell'). Some minds are not offended by the infantile character of this representation. But others discern that this logical development of their conception of 'Self' has led them to an illusory conclusion. If they are then incapable of reconsidering the question of the 'Self' and of reformulating, thanks to metaphysical intuition, the premises from which they started, they find themselves stuck between a point of departure which is apparently real and a conclusion which is evidently illusory; they then speak of the 'enigma' of death and of the insoluble problem that it poses.

The man who speaks of the 'problem' of death expresses a great truth, but he does not understand the exact sense of this truth. He thinks, in fact, that this 'problem' exists objectively, and that his mind has become conscious of it, like a problem in

physics; he really thinks that this carries without doubt a solution, and that it is only insoluble for the imperfect intelligence of man. In reality the 'problem' has no existence outside the human mind; it is this mind that creates it and creates it in such a way that it is quite insoluble.

How is the metaphysician going to treat this 'problem'? He does not bring any solution; he simply shows that the problem does not exist and that as a consequence there is no solution to seek. Common sense believes that every question *that one poses* is a question *that poses itself* and must therefore carry a correct solution. It forgets that a question can be founded on illusory assumptions and does not lend itself to any correct response. If I ask you: 'Why does the Eiffel Tower go for a walk each morning in the sky over Paris?' are you going to take pains to find the correct answer?

The illusory problem of death comes from the fact that man attempts to represent to himself what he is. When it is a question of the reality lying under formal appearances our intellect must abstract itself from all forms other than verbal. To try to represent the question to oneself is to fall without doubt into childish fantasies. We have already explained how man replies implicitly to the question: 'Who am I? Who is this I?' Let us see now what metaphysics teaches us about our reality.

I am manifested in a triple way in my single organism. Can I say that 'I' *am* this triple manifestation? No, because the idea of being implies stability, immobility, permanence; now my triple manifestation is phenomena in incessant movement and impermanent. In as much as I am triple manifestation I only *exist*, I *am* not; this manifestation is not my reality. But all that characterizes me, that makes me my 'Self' and not another, that is personal to me, all this belongs to my manifestation. Then I *am* not in as much as I am different from the rest of the cosmos; I *am* not in as much as I am a 'person'. I *am*, on the contrary, in as much as I *am* the impersonal principle of my manifestation, in as much as I am cosmic mind or absolute principle. In this origin alone resides my 'being', my stability, my immovable permanence. But here I am no more 'Self' than 'Not-Self'; the 'I' is also the 'Not-I'. My organism is just as much the organism of my neighbour as my own; my reality is all things, past, present,

and future, without being any of these things in particular; it is immanent to all manifestation and it is also transcendent to it.

If I ask myself now what I become after death, I see the absurdity of my question. Whether I envisage this 'problem' from the point of view of my principle or of my triple manifestation, its absurdity is equally evident. My principle is immovable being, intemporal; the notion of 'becoming' has no sense when one tries to apply it to my principle. As for my triple manifestation, I cannot ask myself what will become of it; in fact, it is 'becoming', incessant change; can I ask myself intelligently what 'becomes' of becoming?

When I ask myself what becomes of my manifestation, that supposes that it has not entirely become, that it carries with it a certain permanence distinct from becoming and that I have to elucidate a relation between this permanence and becoming. We are going to see why things appear to me thus. When I observe a human being during the course of his living evolution, I recognize that something remains 'similar' under the visible variations; a friend that I meet again after an absence of twenty years has a changed face but 'something' remains the same. All the cells which compose our bodies die and are replaced by others, but the new cells group themselves in a plan similar to the old plan. In the psyche, as in the body, I see, amidst the incessant reshuffling of life, certain constants that persist and which define the being that is observed. I *have thus the impression of permanence in the impermanence.* I do not see why the cessation of life should affect this apparent permanence which the incessant movement of phenomena seems to respect, any more than life itself; in my mind I prolong it, then, beyond death and ask myself about it.

But if I were to reflect more attentively, I would see that no real permanence ever exists in manifestation. What I have interpreted as permanence is only the illusory interpretation, thanks to my memory, of a monotonous repetition of phenomena. The Gulf Stream is a repetition of impermanent phenomena; it is not a real permanence. A forest can keep the same physiognomy for centuries; the surface that it covers keeps the same contours; the same species grow there, the quality of the light stays the same, and so on; this forest, however, is not a real permanence; if one

were to raze it to the ground and replace it by a town, its apparent permanence would show itself to be illusory. Thus what remains similar in a human being amidst his manifestation, is only a repetition of phenomena which gives us the impression of an invariable in the variable; the similarity is not identity; nothing permanent exists there that life might respect and that death should equally have to respect. Death puts an end to a certain repetition of phenomena which was apparently permanent only in our memory. If one thinks well on this one sees that death is not the disappearance of anything; a series of similar phenomena can no more disappear than the phenomena themselves; and a phenomenon cannot disappear because, at each instant, the world of phenomena is both appearance and disappearance; in the same way a becoming can never become, nor would an appearance-disappearance be able to disappear. It is only our memory which endows things with a certain apparent continuity and thus creates the illusion of disappearance. There is disappearance *for us*, but not an objective disappearance. All is always in the eternity of the instant.

A fortiori, death could not be conceived as '*annihilation*'. The idea of annihilation implies that something 'was'. It is only in the confusion between intemporal being and temporal becoming that the idea of annihilation has an apparent sense. If I personalize being, nothingness surges up in my intellectual consciousness; but if I comprehend being impersonally, nothingness is only a hollow image and I see the illusion of the idea of annihilation.

Suppose that I am stretched out in a field one summer's day and that I see a cloud forming in the blue sky. I see it grow bigger and because of my memory I see this cloud evolve and on it my consciousness confers an apparent entity. I can even, if the fancy takes me, distinguish it from all the other clouds, interest myself particularly in it and christen it with a name. Suppose that this cloud is reabsorbed little by little and disappears. What disappears then is a creation of my mind; all sorts of atomic movements were present in the phenomenon of the cloud as it was made and unmade, but the birth of the cloud, its existence, its evolution, its disappearance, all that is only a subjective experience. Am I going to ask what my friend the cloud 'has

become'? Thus it is with a human being; this being is not a being which has appeared, evolved and disappeared; cosmic energy was integrated in order to vibrate for a certain time with a certain monotony, then it was dispersed again to vibrate elsewhere, as the molecules of water are condensed one moment in a cloud and are then evaporated. The cloud is not a reality which appeared and which then disappeared; man is not a reality which was born and which has died. There is only birth and death for our minds, because our minds have imagined an entity there where there was only a moving form created by cosmic energy.

Let us make another comparison, that of a wireless set. The transmitting station symbolizes the absolute principle, the Hertzian waves symbolize cosmic energy, and the set itself the human being. The set emits a voice whose timbre is particular because this timbre depends upon the particular structure of the set. A child hears this voice; he 'animates' the set, he considers it as a 'man' that speaks. Suppose that the set be crushed into pieces. The child wonders where the man has gone, what has become of him; or else the child thinks the man was destroyed. If one were to tell him that the man has not gone anywhere, that nothing has become of him, that he has not been destroyed, one gives the child an insoluble problem. But the adult knows that there is not really a problem there, for the good reason that there never was a man in the set. The transmitting station *is* always; the Hertzian waves 'exist' always, and the voice has not objectively disappeared since it never was; the voice was only an aspect of cosmic energy interpreted as an entity by the child's mind; it has only disappeared for the child.

The anguish that a man can experience in the face of his own death comes from the fact that he identifies himself with his intellectual consciousness by confusing this manifestation of the cosmic mind with the cosmic mind itself. Because of this confusion he sees his intellectual consciousness as eternal. When he imagines death to himself, he sees his dead self as a consciousness with the potentiality of manifesting and which, for lack of sense organs and a brain, does not succeed in manifesting itself. This picture of a power reduced to powerlessness brings in its wake a terrible anguish. But the reality of death has nothing in common with his imagination of it; no consciousness with the potential

of manifesting acts in a dead man to make him see himself as powerless.

At the start of this study we said that the only problem of death concerned our own death. We see now that this theoretical problem is imaginary. The only problem which really exists for me is of a practical kind and concerns the way in which I accept the death of others. Only other men are mortal for me; as for my own organism, it is immortal for me because it is the only organism whose death it will be impossible for me to perceive; I can see my life decline, I cannot see it stop. It is thus with sleep; I can be aware that I will be asleep soon, but not that I am asleep. A man can be killed suddenly without having seen the danger coming; the aeroplane in which he was reading his paper crashes, for example, at 600 miles an hour against a mountain. Never will this man know he is dead. However, the image of his death has been able to haunt him the whole length of his life, inflicting on him the agonies of this insoluble enigma.

CHAPTER 12

THE AIM OF INTELLECTUAL RESEARCH

All human life is a pursuit of happiness, a search for a state which is completely and definitely satisfying. Identified with my organism as the source of all that I perceive, I personify my reality, I make it objective in the 'I-reality', I *see* it and I see it from then on dominated by a 'menace'. I want to eliminate this 'menace'. I struggle against it, I hope to succeed. I want the restlessness of this struggle, not for itself, but in order to attain rest. The 'happiness' that I pursue is precisely this rest. I will be happy when I have destroyed the struggle by destroying the 'enemy'. While the enemy still exists, what I sometimes call my 'happiness' is only my hope for happiness; it is only a momentary state in which I have the impression that my final triumph is possible in the near future.

But it is the same with the 'problem' of happiness as with that of death; it is an insoluble problem because it is posed by my mind in an illusory way. My organism is certainly vulnerable and surrounded by individual things which can harm it; but when my intellect generalizes this particular situation, when it makes it absolute by creating an 'I-reality' over which hovers a 'menace', when it poses thus a conflict between being and nothingness, it manufactures an illusory problem. No manifest conflict can settle this unreal 'metaphysical' dispute. My 'enemy' will be reborn indefinitely from its ashes because the vision of the triumphant Self supposes a Not-Self, overcome, but still existing.

The more I struggle against the Not-Self from the viewpoint which implies it, the more I confirm this viewpoint and. as a consequence, this Not-Self. Thus my combat engenders itself, my efforts to resolve the 'problem' of happiness aggravate the enigma, my need to pursue thrives on the steps that I take towards its fulfilment. I am like a man whose body is dangerously tilted and who runs in order not to fall; he runs in pursuit of his

centre of gravity, but this centre displaces itself with him and thus runs after itself.

I conceive happiness as a state completely and definitely satisfying, as an organic consonance—a personal harmony—pure and immovable. If I were not to conceive happiness in this 'personal' way, I would be, through my universal consciousness, absolute harmony, conciliating the two manifested forms of harmony and disharmony, but because I conceive myself as a fantastic 'person', individual at the same time as universal, the harmony necessary for me in happiness is only manifested harmony which forms, with disharmony, an inseparable dualism. Absolute harmony is eternally present; it is in each moment and there is no need to pursue it. On the contrary, harmony relatively purified, cleared of all disharmony, is a hope which is situated necessarily in the future, at the end of an evolution; it is a chimera that no evolution would be able to attain. Happiness is in the present moment, but I conceive it in such a way that it appears to me to be in the future; my attention, thus turned from real happiness, launches itself towards a mirage which is for ever receding.

My pursuit of happiness is then justly in vain, because it is a pursuit. And it develops as a logical necessity from my dualistic view: 'being and nothingness'; living in fear, and in hope of being one day delivered from fear, I am obliged to force myself towards this goal which is always fleeing. My dualistic vision condemns me to 'forced labour'.

The Buddhist phrase 'all is suffering' is often badly understood. It does not signify that man cannot experience joy and the hope for happiness. It signifies that man can never attain happiness as he conceives it; never can he be fulfilled, fully satisfied. But when he tastes the hope of happiness, when he sees his combat well on the way to realization, he is constrained to throw himself forward with zest towards the impossible accomplishment of his enterprise. It is this obligation to tear oneself from the present in order to thrust oneself towards an ever-fleeing future which constitutes the 'suffering' of which Buddhism speaks. The euphoric man suffers beneath his euphoria because he is not then free; his attention is obliged to run from image to image without finding in any of them the 'haven of

rest'. He is 'uneasy', not calm. This uneasiness does not lie in the fact that the energy of the psychosomatic organism moves without cease, but in the fact that man experiences this movement as an *imposed* necessity. Man would like to taste immobility, the permanence of the absolute principle; but, identifying himself with his dynamic organism, it is in his movement that he seeks in vain for immobility. Thus he experiences his mental movement as a constraint; he feels himself enslaved by his imaginative film, even when this film is joyous; and this enslavement is a suffering in the depths which lives below the sufferings and joys of the surface.

My condition, in my dualist view, is constantly painful. Even when I find life wonderful, I still feel that it is not that; this moment is only a high plateau from which I must take my leave. I am the 'wandering Jew' that a mysterious curse condemns to leave the sweetest of places. I wonder about the sense of this interminable quest, about its cause and about the ways of obtaining my relief.

I understand that the mysterious curse that makes me run is an illusion. No one has condemned me to this torment. I run because I believe I have to, by virtue of the illusory dualistic perspective in which my life seems to unfold. My unhappiness comes from my ignorance.

I work thus to dissipate my ignorance, to acquire the exact and complete comprehension of my error. I cannot see reality as an object because reality is the subject principle from which derives all my looking; but I can at least understand how I interpret badly what I see.

All the preceding studies represent efforts to attain this understanding of my error. By engaging in this intellectual labour I have waited for my relief to come from it. However, I realize on certain days with sadness that my condition is not ameliorated. I have got rid of all sorts of false beliefs, I have destroyed by exact discrimination all sorts of confusions; but this work seems useless; my inner life is still full of agitation. Must I doubt the efficacy of understanding? I cannot doubt it without doubting my reason itself. I am certain that my unhappiness comes from my ignorance; and I am certain that my intellectual intuition can get rid of my ignorance. Why then does my understanding seem, up to the present, to be inefficacious? What is this bridge which is still lacking between my understanding and my life?

In order to understand this difficult question, we must come back again to the progressive preparation designed to bring about sudden realization. We have seen that satori comes about in a sudden way when, in face of the natural way of living according to attachment, man has completely realized the antagonistic and complementary way of living according to 'non-attachment'. Satori does not come from the first realization of non-attachment; it comes when the non-attachment is realized as much as is attachment; when it attains a certain degree, a certain limit.

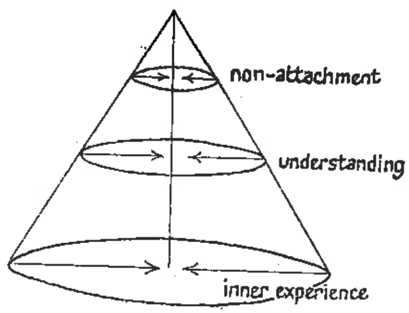
But the realization of non-attachment presupposes that understanding has been obtained. And here also, it is not sufficient that I should have begun to acquire understanding nor that I should have acquired a great deal in order that I might start 'inner counter work'. Here also it is necessary that my understanding should be complete, that it should have attained the necessary limit.

The life of man who reaches satori is divided into four phases. In the first phase this man builds his psychosomatic organism, lives according to attachment and accumulates thus in his memory a certain material of experience. During the course of this first phase, he experiences the suffering of his condition. When this suffering has reached a certain limit he becomes aware that his condition poses a problem for him. He then reflects and enters thus the second phase or the phase of understanding. He makes his intellect work according to its intuitive and logical function until his understanding attains a certain limit. This limit obtained, he understands the usefulness of non-attachment and above all how it can be practised. He enters then into the third phase where he is going to realize non-attachment (the phase in which the inner life becomes a little more peaceful). At last, when the realization of non-attachment attains a certain limit man is introduced by satori into the fourth and last phase. In the course of this evolution, each transition from one phase to the following phase is made in a sudden way when the preceding phase has been realized up to the necessary limit.

The point which interests us above all at this moment is the passage from the phase of theoretical understanding to the

following phase, that in which we are going to realize non-attachment. What does this 'limit' consist of, before which our understanding is insufficient for the pacifying 'counter work' to start, and which, once attained, will allow us to reap what we have sown?

Let us return to the general evolution towards satori and let us use for that a diagram. This diagram shows three superimposed planes, three circular planes included in a cone having a central axis. The lowest plane symbolizes the first phase, inner experimentation; the middle plane symbolizes the second phase, of understanding; the highest plane represents the third phase, of non-attachment. The central axis which ties together the three planes symbolizes the state of satori integrating the totality of the human being.



Each plane materializes from its periphery towards its centre, that is to say, the point of intersection with the axis. The evolution of man in this diagram can be seen as a current of realization which begins to act at the periphery of the lower plane. If the man is endowed with a sufficient sensitivity towards the 'ideal' this current arrives one day at the centre of the lower plane; it then jumps through the central axis to the middle plane and localizes itself at its periphery. As correct understanding is gained, the current converges towards the centre of this plane. If the subject is endowed with a sufficient intellectual intuition, if he meets and recognizes the correct teaching, the centre is attained one day and the current of realization jumps to the higher plane, the plane of non-attachment, and localizes itself at its periphery. As non-attachment is realized, the current converges towards the centre and, if it is attained, the current immediately and for ever occupies the totality of the central axis (satori).

Thanks to this diagram, I can represent to myself how my work for understanding is accomplished. During my intellectual

search I really have the impression in fact that my efforts are directed towards a centre. I 'turn' around the problem of my condition; I envisage it from all possible angles; I encircle it. Sometimes, in my impatience, I try a direct move towards the centre, but I do so in vain because certain peripheral zones have not yet been investigated. As I approach the centre, the more my intuitive insights are general and simple, the more they are of the essence of things. I have the presentiment one day that I am no longer far from an ultimate understanding which will sum up all the insights accumulated in my mind and which will introduce me into the progressive calm of non-attachment. In the same way that there exists among the higher animals a zone of the nervous system which controls all the organic functions, so there exists in our understanding an insight which integrates all our insights. If it were never thus I should doubt that my intellectual work would ever end; if there were not a hierarchy in my intuitive discoveries concerning my condition, never would my understanding be able to attain its aim. By rapport with my personal evolution, there is a hierarchy in the insights that I obtain; there is an ultimate insight which will permit me to leave intellectual reflection alone and to devote myself to the realization of non-attachment.

The review of the research that this book represents is sufficiently advanced now for me to try to carry an assault against the central bastion. It is a question of understanding, not only that my unhappiness comes from my ignorance, nor of what illusory interpretations flow from it, *but of what intimate psychological mechanism basically rules my life in ignorance. It is a question of discovering the articulation which exists between my theoretical ignorance and my practical life. If I come to that I will have discovered at the same time the articulation that I need between my theoretical understanding and my practical life.*

My ignorance expresses itself through a false perspective, by a false vision; it expresses itself then, in my inner phenomena, by an attitude which orientates me and makes me look in a certain direction, a direction in which I am inevitably seized by the optical dualistic illusion. The articulation which ties my ignorance to my life consists in a certain orientation of my being;

that is to say that it consists—since I am identified with my formal intellectual consciousness—in a certain orientation of my intellectual gaze.

All my unhappiness comes from the fact that the gaze of my intellectual consciousness is polarized, magnetized in a certain sense. My attachment consists in the passivity of my attention towards attraction. Non-attachment will consist in balancing my intellectual gaze by developing an antagonistic and complementary magnetism.

The study which is proposed to us now, and which must crown our earlier studies, will bear on this functioning of our intellect and in particular on our intellectual attention. It will describe the normal direction that our attention takes under the influence of a kind of natural magnetic field; it will then describe the new direction that a new magnetic field, born from our understanding, must cause it to take.

PART THREE

CHAPTER 13

THE HIERARCHY OF PSYCHOMOTIVE POWER

We are now led again to the study of the functioning of our thinking and the phenomenon of *attention*, in order to understand to a nicety how our intellectual possibilities are already realized and how they are not. This understanding is necessary for us to discover the technique of 'inner-counter-work' which is capable of bringing to completion the realization of our human nature.

This study must be undertaken from an angle which is quite general; it must encompass the entire constitution of the being which manifests itself in man. We shall begin with *gesture*, with that elementary action on which the structure of our machine comes to a head. We have in fact shown in another work[1] that human anatomy and physiology, in their totality, converge on action, and that *gesture* represents the ultimate functioning of our organism.

Gesture comes from the contraction of muscular fibres. The muscular fibre, the agent of execution, is controlled by a nerve cell, situated in the spinal marrow, which sends out a long extension (nerve fibre) making its way up to the muscle in the sinew. The totality of these nerve cells which control the contraction of muscles constitutes what we shall call the 'lower nervous system'. This 'lower nervous system' directly activates muscular contraction; that is to say that its activity involves this contraction.

Above this system exists a 'higher nervous system'; it is a collection of cells situated in the cerebral layer (cortical cells) which send out fibres uniting them to the medullary cells and which control the activity of the latter. Each medullary cell is controlled by a cortical cell and this control is a type of inhibition; that is to say that the activity of the cortical cell brings

[1] *The Supreme Doctrine.*

about non-activity of the medullary cell, while the non-activity of the cortical cell allows the play of the activity of the medullary cell. As a consequence, if the medullary cell controls muscular contraction, the cortical cell, by inhibiting the action of the medullary cell, controls muscular decontraction.

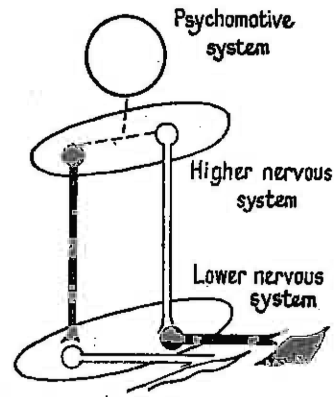
When all the cortical cells are in activity, all medullary cells are inhibited and all the musculature is at rest. If all the cortical cells were inactive, all the medullary cells would be active and all the musculature would be in a lasting contraction. What happens, then, during a voluntary gesture? At each instant of this gesture, certain muscular fibres are contracted while others are at rest; that is because certain medullary cells are active while others are inhibited; and that is because certain cortical cells are inactive while others are active. How is that brought about?

Suppose I am stretched out on my divan with my arms alongside my body. I relax completely; all my muscles are at rest. At this moment all my medullary cells are inhibited by my cortical cells, which are all active. Then I command my right arm to rise several centimetres above the divan; my arm rises. What has happened? A certain part of my muscular fibres, corresponding to this gesture, is brought into activity because the corresponding medullary cells have been relieved of their inhibition and have controlled them; and these medullary cells have ceased to be inhibited because the corresponding cortical cells have ceased to be active. But why have these cortical cells, corresponding precisely to the gesture that I have willed, ceased to be active while all the others persist in their activity? We must surely suppose that the 'superior nervous system', this system which surmounts and controls the lower system, is itself surmounted and controlled by another system which we call 'psychomotive system', a system which has no material support visible to the microscope. When one envisages a single muscular fibre controlled by a single medullary cell which is itself controlled by a single cortical cell, this cortical cell seems to be sufficient explanation for voluntary contraction; it brings about this contraction by ceasing to be active. But as soon as one envisages a gesture during which a great number of muscular fibres contract while others remain at rest, it becomes evident that the non-activity of the numerous

corresponding cortical cells demands an explanation. It becomes evident that this non-activity depends on a superior control acting on it also by way of inhibitor. When I voluntarily raised my arm, the psychomotive system inhibited the cortical cells corresponding to this gesture and thus liberated the activity of the medullary cells controlling the necessary muscular fibres.

We can represent this arrangement in a diagram.

In this diagram it will be sufficient for us to show two muscular fibres, the one symbolizing all the fibres which contract in the present gesture, the other symbolizing all the fibres which remain at rest. It will be sufficient also to show two medullary cells and two cortical cells. One of the cortical cells is active (in black); it controls an inhibited medullary cell (in white) on which depends a muscular fibre at rest (long and thin). The other cortical cell is inhibited; it controls an active medullary cell on which depends a contracted muscular fibre (short and rounded). The circle which surrounds the two medullary cells



represents the lower nervous system and that which surrounds the two cortical cells is the superior nervous system. Above is the psychomotive system: from this goes, towards the two cortical cells, a controlling connection which is going to inhibit one of these cells while leaving the other active. We represent this connection by a dotted line to symbolize the subtle nature of this level of the hierarchy; the anatomist cannot see any nerve fibre that is joined to the cortical cell as he sees the cortical cell join with the medullary cell: we are here outside the domain accessible to our sense organs.

We shall come back soon to the psychosomatic system, and we shall see new systems by which it is itself surmounted. But we wish, before this, to emphasize the mode of inhibition which characterizes the action of the first three levels, because this mode is opposed to preconceived ideas of common sense. We are going to assist ourselves in this by means of a comparison in

which the medullary cell corresponds to the soldier, and his muscular fibre to the broom with which he sweeps the barrack yard; the cortical cell is the non-commissioned officer and the psychomotive system is the officer. In the army, the officer commands the non-commissioned officer and the activity of the one brings about the activity of the other. Then the non-commissioned officer transmits the order to the soldier who executes this order; here again, an activity brings about an activity. In this hierarchy in which the activities of all the levels coincide, each subordinate level only works under the command of the superior level; each level, if there are no orders from above, is inactive. In the psychomotive hierarchy the procedure is different: here the soldier sweeps when the non-commissioned officer says nothing to him; when the non-commissioned officer acts it is to stop the soldier sweeping. When the officer acts it is to stop the non-commissioned officer from stopping the soldier sweeping, so that the latter does sweep. Left to himself, the soldier would sweep all the time; left to himself, the non-commissioned officer would all the time stop the soldier from sweeping. In the military hierarchy, the initiative comes from above and has repercussions at the subordinate levels. In the psychomotive hierarchy, each subordinate level has its constant initiative and the effective action of this initiative is inhibited by the action of superior initiative. To the initiative of the medullary system corresponds involuntary contraction, the cramp; to the initiative of the cortical system corresponds voluntary decontraction; to the initiative of the psychomotive system corresponds voluntary gesture.

The action of the psychomotive system expresses itself in imagining the gesture to be made. It belongs to the subtle manifestation, to the psyche. I contemplate, for example, describing in the air with my index finger the curves of a capital S; I mentally conceive the image of the S and it is here that the operation is purely psychic. Then I decide on this gesture and my index finger realizes it. Notice that the gesture is made without my having to be the least bit concerned about the way that it is done. If I think of it I am aware that the neuro-muscular phenomena which have made the gesture were of a fantastic complexity; each point of the course has corresponded to the

contraction of a multitude of muscular fibres and to the decontraction of a multitude of other fibres. At each instant, the distribution of contracted fibres and decontracted fibres is modified. If the word 'miracle' means the act of provoking a certain modification of the universe without knowing how this modification is realized, the execution of the least gesture is a miracle.

Not only have I not to know how this gesture is realized, whose image I have conceived and which I have ordered, but my consciousness cannot play the smallest part in what it commands. In opposition to what common sense believes, I cannot directly command the contraction of my muscles; *I can only command gestures* and it is only by the command of the gestures that I obtain, indirectly and without knowing how, the contraction of the necessary muscular fibres. Suppose that I were to draw on your body the outline of a muscle and I were to ask you to contract this muscle; you would only achieve this if you knew a gesture in the course of which this muscle contracts; if not, you would make all sorts of movements until you might notice that some gesture makes the muscle, whose outline was drawn, stand out; then only by commanding this precise gesture are you able to realize the muscular contraction that I have asked you for. Here is another demonstration, still more convincing: suppose that, with your forearm remaining flexed at a right angle to your upper-arm, I make your hand support a weight of a pound, then a weight of two pounds. In the two cases the work demanded of your biceps would have been different (because each fibre contracts completely or not at all; it does not contract more or less). Will you pretend that you have commanded the contraction of so many fibres for a pound, then so many fibres for two pounds? You have only commanded the gesture of keeping your forearm immobile and the nervous systems placed under the control of your psychomotive system have done their work without your consciousness having had anything to do with it.

We have said that the psychomotive system conceives and orders the gesture while the subordinate systems execute its order. It is the distinction between legislative power and executive power. But in this hierarchy which presides over the action, if the lower level (muscular fibre) is purely executive and the supreme level (absolute principle as we shall see later) purely

legislative, all the intermediary levels are both at the same time; each of these intermediary levels is legislative in relation to the levels situated below and executive in relation to the levels situated above.

We must now ask ourselves this question: in relation to what is the psychomotive system 'executive'? To reply to this question we must first define the system exactly. It is the will to act; and, since our action tends ceaselessly towards our reintegration (Chap. VII), it is our 'will to live'. It is the particular manifestation, incarnated in our organism, of Yang as integrator. The system which surmounts it is, then, Yang as integrator itself, which we shall also call *Nature*. The psychomotive system is our individual will to live; it is the individual thinking which carries out in us the general or natural will to live and which conceives the corresponding gestures. Nature is general thinking which conceives the general will to live and commands the particular execution of it by our psychomotive system.

As for Nature itself, or the general will of life, it is surmounted by the absolute principle, a pure conception of the universe which commands the execution of the universe by Nature. We can now complete our diagram which brings with it five superimposed systems.

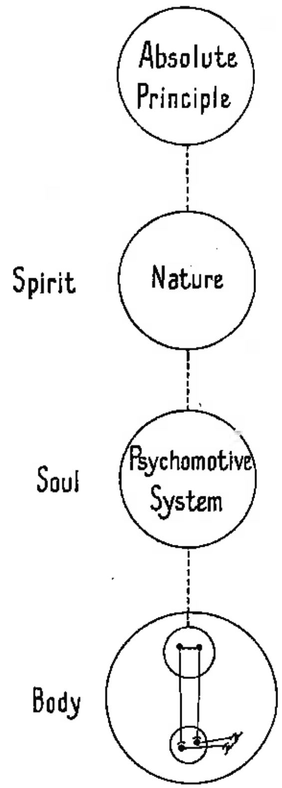
Before commenting on this diagram, we should recall that we must not seek to see in it the structure of man as it is in itself. A diagram is only an artificial construction which helps our intellect to understand certain relations existing between things as they appear to this intellect. Because a diagram indicates certain relations and fails to indicate others, it is always at the same time relatively true and relatively false.

Thus our design takes into account the transcendence of the absolute principle in relation to manifestation, but not its immanence. At first glance one would say that the hierarchy of the five systems is analogous to the military hierarchy, that the absolute principle commands the activity of Nature, which commands the activity of the psychomotive system, which commands in its turn the two nervous systems. In reality, the absolute principle is found at all levels of manifestation; each level is a peculiar dynamism and the control of it operates by way of inhibition. The absolute principle is at the same time the great inhibitor and the great activator, non-operator and operator; it is operator in so far as it is immanent and non-operator in so far as it is transcendent.

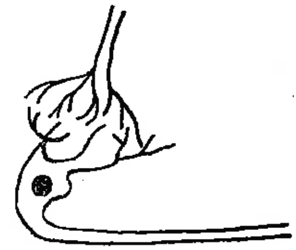
The two nervous systems are accessible to our sense organs. They are 'material' in the normal sense of this word; that is to say that they consist of inanimate things of physiochemical matter. They constitute the material part of the hierarchy. Also they have enclosed us in a circle which represents what we call our *body*.

The psychomotive system is the individual 'will to live', the individual thought which 'animates' the body. So we can call it the *soul*, while Nature, the universal 'will to live', of which the soul is the individual representation, can be called the *spirit*. The spirit belongs to the intemporal domain because, as a source of phenomena, it is not a phenomenon itself. As a source of space-time, it does not depend upon space and time. The soul, in the sense in which we are at present using this word, is the articulation between the universal and the individual, between intemporal and temporal. Thinkers who have thought about an entity which is at the same time intemporal and temporal, and who have used the word 'soul' in order to designate that part of the individual that they supposed to be eternal, wondered about the articulation tying this body and this soul together. In fact, we must call the spirit the intemporal, the body the temporal individual, and the soul the articulation between the two. Thus conceived, it is evident that the soul can be situated neither solely in time nor solely out of time. It is the articulation between the intemporal, as source of phenomena, and the phenomenal totality which constitutes the body; and it shares in the death of the body if one looks at it from the point of view of the body, and in the eternity of the spirit if one looks at it from the point of view of the spirit. Thus one can say that all individuals, whether they are dead, living, or not yet born, are all in the eternal present, although, looked at in time, they belong to the past, the present or the future.

To clarify this difficult question, we may express an analogy between the soul (the articulation between the spirit and the body) and the articulation which exists between the two nervous systems, the higher and the lower. The medullary cell possesses



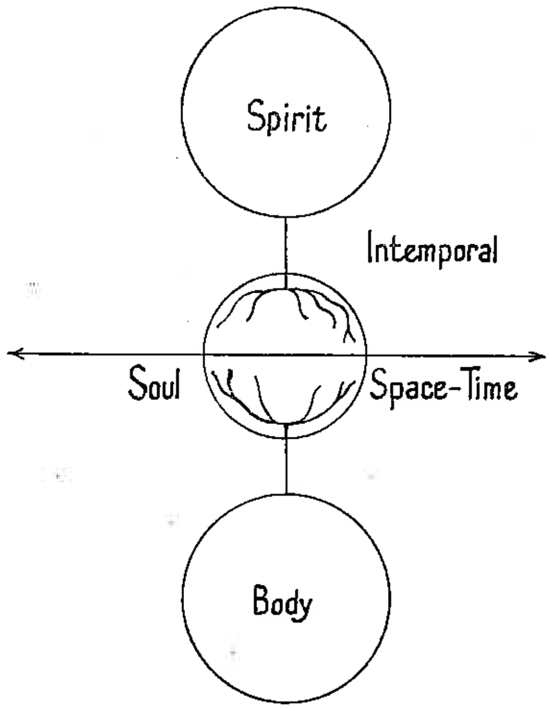
extensions, called dendrites, which divide into nerve fibrils. The fibre which comes from the cortical cell ends with a similar division into fibrils which correspond with the medullary fibrils.



These two systems of fibrils can make or break contact by withdrawing. The totality of this intermittent articulation is called a *synapse*. According to what happens in the synapse, the current coming from the cortical cell (whatever might be the exact nature of this 'current'), either reaches or does not reach the medullary cell. The soul, as articulation between the spirit and the body, can be seen as a subtle synapse analogous to the material synapse that we have just described. We can represent this subtle synapse in a diagram: its two systems of fibrils are situated on both sides of a frontier which separates the intemporal above from space-time below. When the body disintegrates, the lower system of the fibrils of the subtle synapse disintegrates at the same time; but the higher system of fibrils, which emanates from the intemporal spirit, does not disintegrate; there is no disintegration of this system at death, just as there was no integration of it at the birth of the body; it is outside time. Thus the soul, in as much as it is not individual, is immortal; but it is mortal in as much as it is individual and it is metaphysically absurd to believe in the perpetuation of phenomena manifesting the individual and, in particular, the perpetuation of formal consciousness.

The analogy between the psychomotive system and a synapse has also the advantage of showing us that the psychomotive system does not constitute, properly speaking, an autonomous system; it is only the aspect which follows, in our way of thinking, the system of Nature in so far as Nature is manifest in a particular individual. The human being is so preoccupied with questions of death and of an eventual 'survival' that it would appear to be useful to develop a little further our exposition on the soul conceived as articulation between the intemporal and the temporal.

Let us study more closely, first of all, the nature of the relations existing between the various levels of the psychomotive



hierarchy. The work of a particular level depends for its manifestation on the levels which are below it; but it does not depend on the levels below for the functions peculiar to it. If the medullary cells which correspond in me to a certain gesture are destroyed by the virus polio, the conception of this gesture by my cortical cells can still be made (this conception does not depend on the medullary level for its proper function), but it cannot be manifested (it does depend on the lower level for its manifestation). To express this in another way, we can say that, from the point of view of manifestation, the lower level is a *limitation* on the higher level (the higher level can only be manifest according to the possibilities of the lower), but, from the point of view of its own functioning, the higher level is independent of the lower.

Let us apply this to the relations between the intellect and the soul. From the point of view of manifestation, the intellect is a

limitation on the soul. The quality of formal thought depends on the manner of the functioning of the intellect; but, from the point of view of its own dynamism, the soul is independent of the intellect. Here is an example: if I take mescaline, I see coloured images which are extraordinarily precise; or else, with eyes open, I see the outer world transfigured, bathed in an ineffable reality. These perceptions come from my soul, as do my normal perceptions; consequently, we see that my soul constantly harbours such perceptions as a possibility; it contains them always as a potential. Normally, however, my intellect will not allow these manifestations to appear; the limitation that it imposes on my soul excludes such visions; the physiochemical modifications engendered by the mescaline are necessary in order that my intellect should cease stopping these images. The visions of mescalinic drunkenness depend, for their appearance, on the intellect, but their principle does not depend on it; the soul which is their source contains them before my drunkenness and continues to contain them afterwards; the peculiar dynamism of the soul does not depend on the intellect.

A man is in a coma; his intellect reduces the manifestation of the soul to nothing; there are no conscious phenomena. But the soul is not affected by this state of the intellect. Suppose that this man passes from the coma into death; his brain is now definitely out of action. The conscious manifestation of the soul in this man is definitely impossible. However, this soul, in its intemporal part, is in no way affected by the deterioration of the brain, by death. It still 'is', as it 'was' before the birth of this man. It is the absolute principle in so far as this principle contains the possibility of manifesting the man in question; thus it is out of time, independent of birth and death. This man 'is' from all eternity, as the possibility of manifestation contained in the eternal absolute principle. This possibility actualizes between birth and death, but it 'is' eternally, outside of the limits of this temporal actualization. This man who has just died still 'is', although he does not exist any more, as he always 'was' before birth.

But it is absurd to speak of 'survival'. If the man who has just died 'is' always, he does not 'live' any more and will never 'live' any more. Life is individual manifestation and it presupposes the

continual reintegration of the organism. The man who is dead still 'is' outside time, and which is manifested in a 'vital' way during a certain time, we cannot in any way conceive. If I try to grasp it as a mental concept, I will inevitably fall into infantile representations inspired by the manifest world which I perceive at the present through my senses. In fact, all conception lies on the plane of formal manifestation; it is contained *in* the intemporal 'being' which I try to grasp; and therefore conception can neither contain nor understand this intemporal 'being'. I know, with perfect intellectual certainty, that I am, from all eternity, but I cannot represent to myself this eternal 'I'. The soul which was previously manifest in a man now dead, that is to say the possibility of this man eternally contained in the absolute principle, sometimes manifests in the consciousness of living men (spiritualist phenomena). Certain of these phenomena, besides numerous fraudulent ones, are incontestable, but they have always been interpreted in a manner that is inexact. It was thought that the dead were 'existing' again, 'living' again, and that they were manifesting in the consciousness of the 'medium'. Reasoning thus, one is forgetting that 'existence' and 'life' signify manifestation and that a manifestation could not be the source of a psychological consciousness. The phenomena which happen in the consciousness of the medium do not come from the phenomenal totality which constituted the consciousness of the man now dead. In reality the dead man does not 'live' any more, does not 'exist' any more, does not survive; his manifestation, the manifestation of the absolute principle in his organism, has disappeared with this organism. However, this particular manifestation, contained as an intemporal possibility in the absolute principle, along with the indefinite multitude of similar possibilities, acts now in the living organism of the medium. It would not be going too far to say that all spiritual phenomena imply the action of living brains, necessary tools for all psychic manifestation. The 'problem' posed by spiritual phenomena does not concern a potential survival of the dead, but the powers of extrasensory perception of the living. How can we understand these powers?

In our diagram representing the soul as an articulation between the intemporal and the temporal, the intemporal aspect

of the soul appears personal, as also Nature and the absolute principle appear personal to the man in whom they are manifest. This is the inevitable failing of all diagrams of this type. In reality, the intemporal aspect of the soul of a given man is no more personal to him than is Nature or the absolute principle. The intemporal soul of the given man is nothing but the cosmic soul which animates the universe on its vital plane. If, normally, this cosmic soul is manifest in me only in an individual way, only through my sense organs, it is because of my egotistical contraction, of my claim-to-be-absolutely-in-so-far-as-I-am-distinct. However, certain men, in certain conditions, can partially expand this contraction in favour of an aspect of the cosmos other than their own organism. This partial decontraction of a medium opens his consciousness to the action of the absolute principle in so far as it contains, intemporarily, something foreign to the organism of the medium. The consciousness of the medium then manifests the absolute principle which is the source of this foreign thing. The absolute principle is manifested, then, as if it were this thing. The medium, whom one believes to be in communication with a dead man, is simply manifesting the absolute principle in the manner of the dead man, as this dead man did during his whole life, and as he would still, if he were not dead.

Let us look now at our psychomotive hierarchy from the point of view of *freedom*. According to their situation, the levels are more or less free in relation to the importance of that which they condition and of that by which they are conditioned. The muscular fibre is not free in any way because it does not condition anything and is conditioned by all the other levels. The lower nervous system enjoys a certain freedom because it conditions the muscular fibres. The higher nervous system has more freedom because it conditions the lower system and, through it, the muscular fibres. Only the absolute principle is perfectly free because it conditions all and is conditioned by nothing. We shall see, in the next chapter, that man, in the incomplete state of development which is normally his, only enjoys a relative freedom, because he only realizes a part of the hierarchy which we are studying now, but we shall also see that he *can* realize the entire hierarchy and thus enjoy total freedom.

CHAPTER 14

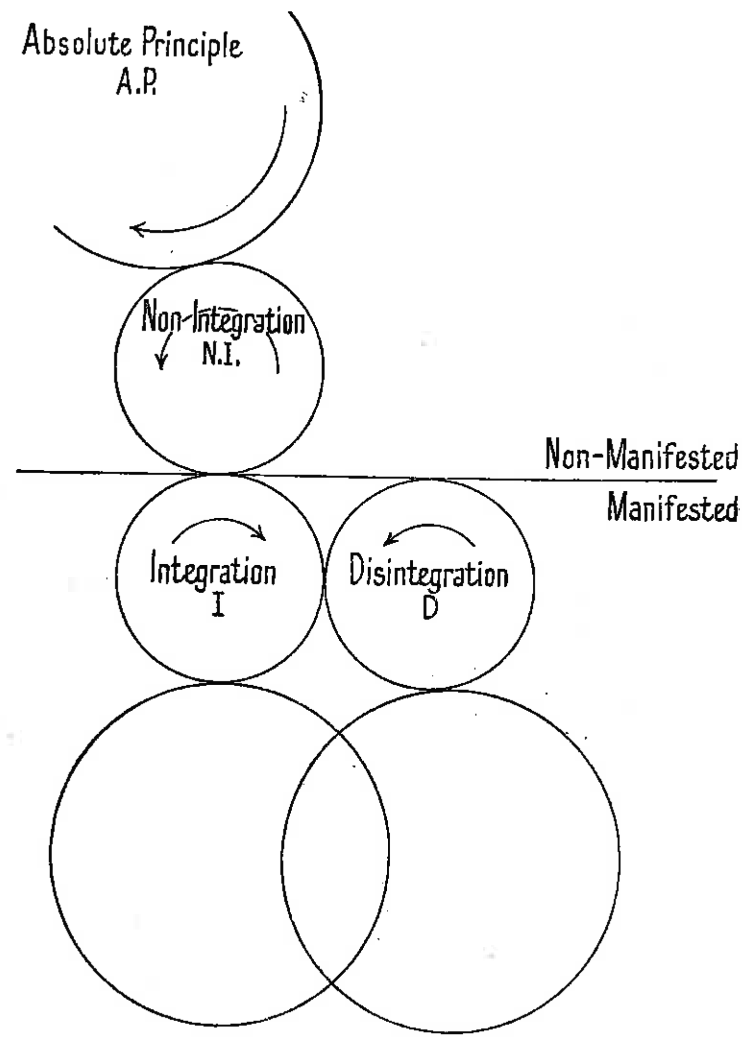
THE COMPLETE CONSTITUTION OF MAN

We have seen, when we studied the three cosmic planes, that man incarnates in himself the integrating and disintegrating aspects of Yang, the creative cosmic thought, but that he only realizes, in his normal development, the integrating aspect of this thought. We can now treat this question more completely, thanks to the ideas developed in the preceding chapter on the hierarchy of systems which constitute man.

Again, we shall use a diagram. This diagram comprises a certain number of wheels, either superimposed or juxtaposed, and divided into three stages; at the highest stage, the big wheel represents the absolute principle; at the lowest stage, the medium-sized wheels represent the human organism through its two metabolisms, disintegrative and reintegrative; and at the middle stage, the three little wheels represent Nature.

A warning is interposed here: it would be a mistake to seek an exact continuity between this diagram and that of the preceding chapter. Once again, these diagrams do not pretend to express completely the ideas treated. Each chapter exposes a certain view arrived at from a certain angle. The different views must co-exist in our memory, and be harmonized there in an informal understanding, without our believing that we must fit their formal expressions together literally. The metaphysical domain has not only three dimensions, but an indefinite number; our diagrams escape the laws which govern industrial blueprints.

At the summit of our structure is the absolute principle. From the point of view of 'integration-disintegration', from which we are presently studying the complete constitution of man, the absolute principle, as source of all cosmic energy, lies upstream of this energy and of the two aspects of activity. It is at the same time action and non-action. The still centre of the great wheel corresponds to non-action, while its mobile circumference corresponds to action.



Right at the bottom of our structure are the two wheels which symbolize the human organism. This organism is the result of two kinds of phenomena, the one destructive or disintegrative, the other constructive or integrative.

Between the absolute principle and the human organism are the three wheels which represent Nature. Before seeing why Nature is represented here by three wheels and why these wheels are placed as they are, we must ask why we have to interpose a 'Nature' level between the absolute principle and ourselves. Should we not be able to consider our organism as being moved directly by the action of the absolute principle?

In our mental picture distinction is drawn between the absolute principle and manifestation. We cannot confuse the immovable One, which we intuitively know to be behind cosmic movement, with cosmic movement itself. We must distinguish the principle as it *is* the principle, from the principle as it is *manifest*; we must distinguish the principle action from the cosmic action which is at work in all phenomena. But, moreover, we must distinguish equally between general cosmic movement and the 'ten thousand things', the phenomena, that it creates. The general laws of the cosmos, which exist in a *dual* way (law of gravity—law of the expansion of the universe, centripetal law, centrifugal law, etc.), must be distinguished, not only from the *One* principle, but also from indefinite *multiplicity*. So, because of its power of discrimination, our intellect must conceive the existence of another system between the absolute principle and our organism, between the noumenon and the phenomena. This system is what we are here calling Nature.

We represent Nature by three wheels separated into two stages—one wheel above and the two others below—because this system of Nature necessarily presents to our discriminative intellect two faces: one of these faces, the one having a single nature, looks towards the noumenon and is articulated with it; the other, having a dual nature, looks towards the multiplicity of phenomena, structured in a dual way, and articulates with this multiplicity. The two lower wheels of nature, carrying the letters I and D, represent Integration and Disintegration which are at work in Nature in such a way that they are linked together and complementary. The designation of the higher wheel of Nature, marked N-I, needs more careful understanding. N-I means 'non-integration': we have chosen this term because this face of Nature, turned towards the absolute principle and articulated with it, belongs still to the domain of the non-manifest. This negative term, as with all analogous terms used in metaphysics, does not have the meaning of privation; non-integration does not designate a Nature which integrates nothing, but Nature in so far as it is the anterior principle to integration and disintegration.

One might ask why we have non-integration articulated with integration rather than with disintegration. This is because the organism, though part of it might die at the same time as it is reborn, starts by being born. If its manifestation is at the same time integrating and disintegrating during life, its first appearance is integrating. It is disintegration that has the last word in our lives; integration has the first. Because of this we see that during the course of existence the initiative belongs to integration.

Between these two faces of Nature passes the frontier which separates the non-manifested (above) from the manifested (below). In manifestation, the two lower wheels of Nature represent the subtle, or psychic, aspect of this manifestation, and the two lowest wheels in the diagram represent its gross or material aspect, the living organism that physiologists can study with their instruments of observation and measurement.

In the whole of our diagram, we have chosen to symbolise the dynamic cosmic links by wheels directly articulated with one another because this arrangement takes into account the law of *complementaries*. The wheels, thus articulated, turn in pairs in an inverse direction to each other (not as they would if driven by belts). It is seen in our drawing that we have arbitrarily made the absolute principle turn in a clockwise direction and this necessarily determines the direction of the rest of the system. One could obviously turn all the directions around. What is interesting, as we shall see further on, are the relations of identity which exist between the direction of the rotation of the different wheels.

What we said, in the course of the preceding chapter, about the hierarchy of freedom within our structure at various levels,

applies to the structure of our present diagram. The useful idea which comes from it is this: that man, at the end of his complete development, can realize within himself all the wheels of our diagram, that is to say that he can be totally free. But, in the state of his normal development, he only realizes the two lowest wheels and the 'integration' wheel of Nature; in this state he is only partially free. We are going to explain this essential point as well as we can and we shall start to do so by saying a few words about the structure of the animal.

The animal itself realizes, and can only realize, the two lowest wheels representing its organism. All the other wheels operate to move this organism, but are not realized in the animal. All that is above the organism is beyond the animal because the animal, for lack of intellect (universal consciousness manifested by language), is limited to the individual or particular domain. Universal Nature moves the animal too, but it has not access to the plane of Nature, not even in its integrative aspect. The animal wants actions which favour its life or keep away its death; but, for lack of conceiving general ideas of 'life' and 'death', it cannot wish for its life nor refuse its death. When, for example, we see a young dog push greedily at the teats of its mother, we may think: 'How he wants to live!' But that is what we should think only about man. The little dog wants to suck his mother and this is because Nature wants his life and delegates to him the trouble of doing what is necessary to live, but he himself cannot will his life. In the same way, an animal which is attacked cannot decline to accept its death while it struggles; it only declines to accept the injuries which its enemy wishes to inflict upon it.

The 'will to live' reintegrative thought is incarnated in the animal; everything happens, we have said, as if Nature confided to the living creature its reintegrative task. But this 'will to live', although incarnated in this creature, is not realized in it; the animal is not conscious of it in its general form. A particular thought acts in the animal, but the animal does not *have* this thought; it does not grasp this thought because it lacks the universal consciousness which it must have if it is to do so. It perceives something and it wants it, but it cannot perceive that it perceives this thing and that it wants it.

To say that the thinking of the animal acts in it, but does not belong to it, is to say that the idea is conditioned by something outside the animal. It is entirely conditioned by Nature, the Nature that the animal does not realize at all. The thinking of the animal is in no way free. Its cortical system enjoys a certain freedom, since it conditions the medullary system, and so does the latter because it conditions the muscular fibres, but the essence of the animal, which is its 'will to live', is not free.

We can see, at the same time, that the animal cannot feel enslaved in any way. For a creature to feel enslaved, it must contain a possibility of freedom that it has not realized. The animal does not contain any possibility of unrealized freedom and therefore it cannot feel enslaved. It can feel objects opposing it desires, it can feel itself opposed by outer enemies against which it struggles; but it cannot feel its being inwardly oppressed by Nature—although Nature conditions it entirely—for lack of an intellect which would raise it to the level of universal Nature. It is the plaything of its 'will to live', but it cannot be aware of this, since it cannot perceive this 'will to live'. A slave who cannot perceive the existence of his master could not possibly feel enslaved, since one can only feel oneself a slave to someone or something.

The thinking of the animal, totally and rightly conditioned by Nature, is structured as Nature itself in a dual way, but is not dualistic. When we study, later on, the structure of verbal thinking in man, we shall see in a parallel way how the imaginative film of the animal is made. We need say here only that the thinking of the animal contains impartially, as does Nature itself, harmony and disharmony, integration and disintegration, convergence and divergence. The associations are continually rearranged in it; nothing is stable (as opposed to what we shall see in man in whom appear the immovable associations of logical equations). The animal does not know harmony and disharmony in themselves, in their general or universal aspects; therefore its particular *preference* for its own convergent integration cannot be prolonged in its thoughts as a *partiality* for integration in general and, through this, for some particular integration; an animal will never conceive that something *ought to exist*.

At the beginning of his life, man operates as does the animal;

the baby, like the animal, is a dynamism incarnated around the 'will to live'; but it is incapable of consciously willing to live, for lack of being able to conceive the idea of it.

Then the intellect appears. The consciousness of the child becomes capable of conceiving general ideas, of perceiving them from a 'subject-object' point of view and of manipulating them in logical equations, all of which happens, thanks to language, to words which symbolize these ideas and make them into apparently autonomous entities.

This supreme power which constitutes verbal intellect seems to be a royal gift. In fact, it introduces man into a world of harrowing contradictions. It does so because the intellect does not appear, there and then, at its full development, but in a progressive way.

If the intellect were to appear, there and then, with all its possibilities, the child would perceive the unique and immovable reality in all the phenomena which manifest cosmic movement. He would realize the immanence, in all phenomena, of this transcendent reality. He would perceive general integration and general disintegration, life and death, as equal and complementary since they would be conciliated in the becoming which dynamically manifests immovable being. Should this child be capable of perceiving the one reality willing itself by itself, he would will for himself the becoming which manifests reality. He would adhere to the 'nature of things', to his own death as to his own life.

He would fulfil the natural 'will to live', but without attachment, by accepting its inevitable cessation. While willing, in his animal essence, his life and not his death, he would will, in his human essence, all that happens. His effort to live would not be a dramatic struggle unfolding beneath the sword of Damocles, but a play whose blissful characteristics depend in no way on its outcome. Human life, whatever might be its phenomenal incidents, would be bathed in that atmosphere which evokes the Zen phrase: *'Earth, that is Heaven'*.

In all, if the intellect were to appear in all its fullness, man would realize, at one blow, all the wheels of our diagram, up to and including the absolute principle.

But the intellect appears in a progressive way. The realization

of man who is, in theory, called upon to occupy all the wheels of the diagram, is in practice effected in the manner of an ascending flight which leaves the lower wheels and which climbs to the assault of the complete edifice. During the course of this ascent the flight soon meets an obstacle which stops it, and we are now going to study the nature of this obstacle.

The development of the intellect is progressive. The first concepts generalized by speech are constructed in the child in relation to concrete things belonging to the surrounding world. What the child first names are particular things or persons. A year or two later, verbal concepts are built up in him concerning abstract things and much later metaphysical intuitions become possible, although these do not appear consciously in the majority of men for lack of a correct initiation. In the course of this evolution, abstract ideas are encountered in their dual aspect long before the conciliatory intuitions are possible. It is thus that the ideas of 'life' and 'death'—that is Nature as integrator and Nature as disintegrator—are encountered long before their conciliation is possible through the concept of Nature as total and eternal (non-integrator). The human being, rising above the two organic wheels, meets the two wheels of integration and disintegration which represent the manifest side of Nature. This happens when the child, about three or four years old, discovers the idea of 'death' and, through a necessary antithesis, the idea of 'life'. It is quite frequent that the child of this age poses questions about death and is even obsessed by them for several days or weeks. The discovery of the dualism of 'life-death' is at the same time the discovery of the dualisms 'success-failure', 'power-impotence' and so on.

Here the child meets, because conciliation is not possible for him, some apparent oppositions, some dilemmas the terms of which are, for him, mutually exclusive of one another in such a way that he cannot wish for the one without refusing the other. The baby, in whom the animal essence was still the only one realized, incarnated the natural 'will to live', but not the 'will to die'. Therefore, when the child meets the ideas of 'life' and 'death', of Nature as integrator and Nature as disintegrator, he necessarily chooses to realize in himself only Nature as integrator. This choice is expressed in him by the belief that his

life ought to be, that it is right and in order, while his death ought not to be, is not right, and is contrary to order. Thus arriving at the level of manifested Nature, the child accepts the realization of the integration wheel and refuses that of the disintegration wheel.

We have said that the child wishes for life and refuses death. In reality it is more complex because, at this moment, the human being ceases to be only an organism, an ego. It is now the 'idea of an ego' or an 'ideal ego', general and distinct from the organism. It is an 'I-reality' which, identified fundamentally with the organism, can transfer this identification on to other things, either concrete or abstract. Thus the adherence to the single wheel of integration expresses itself by a will which is no longer essentially a will to live, but a will to integration limited by the ideal ego, a will for the affirmation of the Self, even if, in some circumstances, the limitation by the Self of this affirmation implies the sacrifice of organic life.

The fact that man realizes only the wheel of integration and refuses the wheel of disintegration has, as a consequence, the non-realization of the wheel of non-integration which surmounts the other two and represents unmanifest Nature. We are going to try to show why this is so.

From the point of view that man has at his normal stage of development, non-integration resembles disintegration and appears to him to be identical to it. The truth is that non-integration is 'primordial chaos', not in the sense of disorder, but in the sense of primordial cosmic energy not yet manifest in the ten thousand things. In Genesis, chaos is not a disordered mixture of light and darkness, earth and water, etc. It designates primordial substance (*Prakiti of the Vedanta*), from which light and darkness, earth and water are born. But this Nature as yet undifferentiated, for man enclosed in the dualism integration-disintegration, resembles a disintegration; and the refusal to realize disintegration is, at the same time, refusal of the primordial cosmic energy of the non-integration wheel. If you were to tell a man that he will re-enter, after his death, the great undifferentiated All from which emanates all creation, he would see this passing from life as a disintegration to below life.

So man refuses to realize non-integration at the same time as

he refuses disintegration. Acting thus, he is prohibited at the same time from realizing the absolute principle to which voluntary realization of non-integration would lead. The direction of rotation of the different wheels in our diagram illustrates what we have just said. The direction of the wheel of non-integration is the same as that of the wheel of disintegration. The movement of non-integration resembles, in a formal way of looking at things, the movement of disintegration. Note also that the direction of the wheel of integration is the same as that of the wheel of the absolute principle; thus life, integration, resembles for us reality. Our nostalgia for absolute reality is expressed by a nostalgia for the life which appears to resemble it. But the adoration of life brings in its wake a refusal of death which bars us on the way to the absolute.

It is this refusal which, in the Christian religion, is symbolized by the 'no' of Satan. Satan, standing against the divine order, represents the inner attitude that the human being assumes from the time of the appearance in him of the intellect.

We have had to present these notions which are so important, first of all, in an abstract and schematic way. We shall see, in the following chapter, what they correspond to in the functioning of our concrete intelligence.

CHAPTER 15

THE STRUCTURE OF THE WORLD OF SPEECH

The acceptance of integration and the refusal of disintegration and non-integration are found in the world of speech to which man gains access when universal consciousness begins to manifest in him. This world is quite new, quite different from that in which the baby lives who is still incapable of speaking.

While the baby, like the animal, *is* his individual thinking, the child in whom the intellect has appeared *possesses* this thinking. Universal consciousness in him sees the phenomena of his individual consciousness. Thanks to this universal consciousness, he has concepts in the same way that one has objects which can be disposed of and arranged at will. The grasp that his consciousness has on these concepts is brought about thanks to words which are symbolic gestures which incarnate the 'ideas' and make them autonomous. When the child has learned from those around him the word 'sore' he does not limit himself, as does the animal, to feeling a pain which is present, but he knows that he feels it; he grasps it in a general way. He can associate it, at his pleasure with another idea and create, for example, by expressing it, the idea that the doll is sore.

This acquisition of language, which permits the manifestation of the universal consciousness, is truly an initiation. The 'wolf' children who, having grown up far from human beings, were discovered at about the age of eighteen did not have language and they only learned to speak with great difficulty. One of these observations concerns two Indian girls who had grown up together; they had not invented between them any language although they had in their organism all the necessary mechanism to do so. In the same way that every living creature emanates from another living creature which is already developed, all intellect emanates from another intellect already developed.

By using language which has been transmitted to him, the

human being creates a personal representation of the world; though it might be concerned with a world entirely imaginary, or of a verbal interpretation of the real present world, man always creates a 'world representation' which is autonomous and disassociated from the outer objective world, a world for himself alone.

We will call this subjective world 'the world of speech' and we will call the thought which created it 'verbal'. Certainly the mental representations that I have throughout the day are not always accompanied by an inner language which is clearly articulated by phrases completely pronounced in my head, as is the case when I mentally recite a poem. But even when this verbal articulation is not accomplished, when the verbal structure of my inner world is not clearly manifested, it none the less exists in a potential way; my thought is still of a *verbal nature*. My inner monologue is always structured in a way which implies the use of words, whether these words are effectively articulated or not.

In order to describe the constitution of this verbal world, in which the refusal of disintegration and non-integration is going to operate, we must make use of the identity which exists between the macrocosm and the microcosm. The constitution of the macrocosm is threefold; the original permanent and immutable cosmic movement conciliates two inferior movements, the one convergent (on which depend all the phenomena of integration), the other divergent (on which depend all the phenomena of disintegration). Absolute harmony conciliates relative harmony (integration-convergence) the other relative disharmony (disintegration-divergence).

We are going to show that the constitution of our verbal world is likewise threefold. It has, according to the same triangular disposition, three movements, three dynamic structures. There is, first of all, an immutable structure as conciliator, it is the structure of syntax or logic. Below it and conciliated by it lie two antagonistic and complementary structures. The one is egocentric; it is converging, integrating and has bestowed upon it a relative harmony, a subjective 'meaning'; the other is non-egocentric; it is divergent, disintegrating, relatively disharmonious and has not a subjective meaning bestowed upon it.

The syntactical structure dominates the convergent-divergent dualism. In fact, it is entirely based on the *principle of identity* which is based on the One (which cannot be either converging or diverging). Each word is symbolically identical to that which it designates. All definitions of a word potentially necessitate the verb 'to be'; something *is* that which presents some form or serves some use, etc. Each phrase is an equation. If the verb 'to be' is not always expressed, it is always underlying. For example: 'The spider spins its web' expresses the idea that the action of the spider *is* the action of 'spinning its web'; 'France wishes for peace' expresses the idea that the wish of France *is* a wish for peace, and so on. Each argument is a series of equations. For example: 'Socrates *is* a man, who *is* mortal'; this is quite analogous to the equation: A equals B equals C. Syntax is an algebra. However complicated the two sides of an algebraic equation might be, the equation which expresses them is essentially an equality which rests on the principle of identity (equality being an identity of value). It is the same with all sentences, however complicated they might appear.

Resting on this principle of identity, the syntactical structure dominates the convergent-divergent, integrating-disintegrating dualism. Identity is in fact not a convergence, since it manifests the unity principle. Unity can be seen, just as well, as absolute divergence or as absolute convergence, according to how one envisages it as 'manifesting itself' or as 'being'; and it can be seen as neither the one nor the other.

Thus syntactical structure is universal and eternal, as are mathematics. Languages vary in their modalities, according to space and time—in the same way that mathematics can vary in their modalities—but their logical structure remains essentially immutable.

Beneath this unique, universal and objective syntactical structure, lies a dual, subjective, verbal structure which brings with it two aspects, the one egocentric or converging, the other non-egocentric or diverging. For example: if my verbal thought can create the idea 'the cook uses saucepans', it can also create the idea that 'the cook betrays some serpents'. These two verbal ideas participate in the syntactical structure which is one, and therefore they are single and have absolute meaning; they

manifest equally the principal identity of all things; the one, like the other, manifests the original mental movement or essence of the mind. But, beneath the unique syntactical structure, these two sentences belong to two inferior structures which are antagonistic and complementary, the one converging and having the appearance of 'meaning', the other diverging and having the appearance of 'meaninglessness'.

We say that the first sentence is converging or egocentric because this verbal equation corresponds to an equation which exists for my sense organs, that is to say for my animal individual thinking, or for my ego. The words 'cook', 'uses' and 'saucepans' designate things that I perceive to be associated in the outer world, things which my ego associates. On the contrary the words 'cook', 'betrays' and 'serpents' designate things that I do not associate in any way, whose association corresponds to nothing that my organism perceives.

The term 'egocentric' may seem surprising, since my monologue does not always speak about me. But if I do not always appear in it nominally, I am always in my monologue through identification of the 'I-reality' with something which is named in it.

It is interesting, in this regard, to notice that syntax talks about the subject before the verb which predicates it; let us also look at the current expression: 'what *subject* are you going to treat?' I necessarily identify myself with that about which I speak, not always obviously in an affective identification, but in an intellectual identification. To say that my inner monologue is centred around something and to say that it is egocentric comes to the same thing. Our verbal world, then, has three dynamic structures; one of the structures is general, syntactical, absolutely harmonious; and the other two structures are particular, the one centred, converging, relatively harmonious, the other non-centred, diverging, relatively disharmonious. These three movements of a microcosm correspond to the three wheels of nature in our last diagram. The particular converging structure corresponds to the wheel of integration which we want to realize. The particular diverging structure corresponds to the wheel of disintegration that we refuse. The general syntactical structure corresponds to the wheel of non-integration; the last dominates

and commands, equally, the two others, but we do not 'realize' it.

These affirmations can give rise to two objections to which we must reply. The first expresses itself thus: 'Why say that our language contains a divergent structure? A sentence such as "the cook betrays some serpents" is artificial. The nature of things does not bring us to speak thus and we have not, then, to refuse a structure which is not offered to us.' This objection is based on an error; to claim that the divergent sentence is not in the nature of things is to show precisely our normal refusal of verbal divergence. Let us make an experiment: let your mind, being relaxed, say anything without your worrying in any way about the meaning of what you say. In what will come to you, you will perceive two things: first of all, it will be more or less incoherent, divergent, which proves that this structure is truly in the 'nature of things'; on the other hand, syntactical structure is present, although perhaps it is reduced to a minimum; a series of words has been able to come to you which do not form a sentence; but then each word has appeared separately from its neighbours and constitutes a minimal equation. As soon as the words are tied together, they are tied together according to syntax; you could not imagine an intellectual liaison between words which is not constructed according to the universal syntactical structure.

We must emphasize the fact that the divergent verbal structure is truly in the nature of things. My mind contains an indefinite number of possible divergent sentences, in the same way that it contains an indefinite number of possible convergent sentences. I normally only elaborate convergent sentences, but this does not deny, in any way, the existence of the divergent half of my verbal world.

You may also ask me why I say that we do not 'realize', in our normal state, syntactical structure, while we use it incessantly. In saying that we do not realize this structure, I mean that the absolute meaning which belongs to it escapes us. When I hear 'The cook uses saucepans', I understand the particular meaning of this sentence; when I hear 'The cook betrays some serpents', I understand the particular meaninglessness of this sentence. But I do not understand the absolute meaning that these two

sentences have expressed equally and which manifests the unity principle. The Zen master replies to the disciple who poses a question of doctrinal importance: 'The Cypress in the courtyard'. Any other divergent phrase would have served the purpose. The master tries thus to direct the mind of the disciple towards the absolute meaning of our mental functioning; he tries, at least, to show to the disciple that there exists, in his verbal intellect, an absolute meaning which could illuminate him, but which escapes him for the moment.

We are going to speak now, in more detail, of our refusal of divergent language. We shall then show how this refusal winds up in the non-comprehension of the absolute meaning of our verbal world and in the painful impression of being enslaved.

The refusal of divergent language does not arise from the fact that I do not make use of it in practice. It does not come from my normal convergent way of speaking, nor from the preference that I have for this way. It results from the theoretical partiality that I nourish for convergent language as opposed to divergent language. I am *attached* to convergent language, to its 'meaningful' appearance, I believe that its 'meaning' is the *real* meaning, that it ought to 'be', while the 'meaninglessness' of divergent language is *anti-real* and ought not to 'be'. *This attachment is the way in which my animal functioning, which only wants my organic integration and refuses its disintegration, prolongs itself in my intellectual functioning.* The animal 'will to live' prolongs itself by idealizing the intellectual convergence identified with the real, while the animal 'non-will to die' prolongs itself in refusing the intellectual divergence identified with the not real. I idealize the relative harmony of the cosmos and I reject its relative disharmony. I hold to the pure positivity of the world that my intellect recreates, to its purely centred, convergent structure. All men have the nostalgia for attaining to the one truth in their verbal microcosm and this is thanks to a convergence which is more and more perfect in this microcosm. This nostalgia is not always perceived consciously, but it nevertheless exists. When it reaches consciousness it is expressed by the idea that there ought to be some explicit knowledge which can be expressed and which would give the key to the entire cosmos. A man like Mallarmé deliberately searched through the

'magical' manipulation of convergent language to attain an absolute convergence limit which would transcend his own form and would be supreme reality.

We cherish the opinion which decrees the reality of verbal convergence alone; so we cherish this convergence exclusively. If poetical language often brushes against divergence, it is in a subtle play in which it gets away from the cherished convergence in order to enjoy, all the more strongly, returning to it. The poet expresses correspondences, analogies between things which are most removed from each other; it is, thus, not a question of a wish for divergence, but on the contrary to tie together those things which appear most disunited. The musician does this who explores the world of dissonances in order then to enjoy their resolution; or, if he does not resolve them, in order to evoke the idealized consonance in a powerfully nostalgic contrast. Beneath the most discordant forms of art, one meets again the human nostalgia for an absolute harmony which is sought by all means, however desperate these means might be. The regrettable thing, from the point of view of my complete development, is not that my intellect incessantly functions in a convergent way, but that it should be *exclusively attached* to this way and refuse the divergent way. This attachment results in a veritable *inhibition*. To inhibit a function is to not accomplish it, it is to condemn it, to regard it as though it 'ought not to be'. In inhibiting the divergent mode of my intellect, I isolate it from the convergent mode, I oppose it to the convergent mode and I transform the structural duality of my verbal world into an irreconcilable dualism. I live, from then on, in a world of contradictions, in which the true and the false are opposed, and in which these oppositions hide me from the conciliating one reality.

We can clarify these ideas by applying them to the Vedantic illustration about the clay and the objects of clay. All these objects are made of clay but, because of my attachment to their particular form, I only see the objects, not the clay of which they are made. If one of these objects possesses a gracious and useful form, while another possesses an ugly and useless form, I experience two opposed reactions with regard to these two objects; I do not experience their identity in that they manifest the same substance. Thus it is in my mind that the same 'mental

substance', the same 'mental essence', lies under the two forms of convergence and divergence; because of my attachment for convergent form, I am fascinated by the apparent dualism of this world and I do not perceive the mental essence which reigns equally over the 'meaningful' sentences and over the 'meaningless' sentences.

This state of affairs ends with my having an impression of enslavement. While my inner monologue unrolls, I have the impression of not being free; I *must* think, I cannot stop myself; above all I do not think what I wish; all that I can do is to determine the subject that my monologue is going to treat, but the ideas, the particular phrases which are going to come to me concerning this subject will *come to me* themselves and I confine myself to receiving them. The movement of my verbal thought carries me willy nilly. I feel my thought conditioned by Nature, and, feeling this Nature as foreign to me, I feel myself conditioned in my thinking by Nature; I feel myself enslaved by it.

If my thinking is not apparently free, it is not because it is conditioned by Nature, but because it is conditioned by the single integration aspect of Nature. To my misfortune, it is only conditioned by a half of Nature. If it were totally conditioned by Nature, it would be autoconditioned, since by virtue of my human essence which accedes to the universal plane, I *am* Nature with its triangular structure, non-integration dominating and conciliating integration and disintegration. Nature is *my* nature. If my thinking were conditioned by my total nature, it would be auto-conditioned and thus it would be free.

As it functions in me today, my thinking accepts being conditioned by the integrative aspect of my nature, but it refuses to be conditioned by my nature's disintegrative aspect. That is to say that I identify myself with my thinking in so far as it is conditioned by integrative nature alone, in so far as it is clothed in a convergent form. I claim that it is 'me' who utters my 'meaningful' sentences while the 'meaningless' sentence that I allow to come *is said in me*. I am thus divided against myself.

My refusal to identify myself with my divergent thinking remains theoretical; in reality this thinking manifests in me as well as my convergent thinking, it manifests equally in my

mental essence, which is my essence. *Because of this theoretical refusal everything happens for me, from the point of view of what I experience, as if one half of my mental world were me, the other half being foreign to me.* I assume an attitude in which I only consider the meaningful, harmonious products of my mind, 'rationalized' productions, which correspond to the idea that I conceive of reasonable thought. This is a sort of voluntary blindness; thus, by squinting, the vision of one of the eyes is inhibited. I want to ignore the divergent functioning of my mind —I censor it. I only allow to come to my consciousness, I only grasp, the convergent aspect of my mental activity.

But the divergent aspect which I refuse to grasp, by claiming it to be non-existent, exists all the same. In the attitude that I have, this half of the conditioning of my thought by my nature acts in spite of me, against me. Instead of thinking in a convergent way *alongside* the divergent functioning, which is equally accepted in principle, I think *against* this unacceptable divergent functioning. But, if I thus oppose myself to one half of my mental dynamism, without attaining to its obvious destruction, this half is acting against me. My hostile attitude towards a part of my mental movement inevitably ends for me in the impression that this part is hostile to me. Everything happens in me as if my thinking were conditioned in part by my nature and in part by an enemy of my nature. So, although my freedom is in reality complete, I have the impression of being enslaved in my thinking, that is to say in my essence; I have then the impression of being enslaved in my 'being' itself. And the more strongly I allow myself to be conditioned in my thinking by the single convergent aspect of my nature, by refusing its divergent aspect, the more strongly I experience the illusion of being enslaved by what in reality does not enslave me at all.

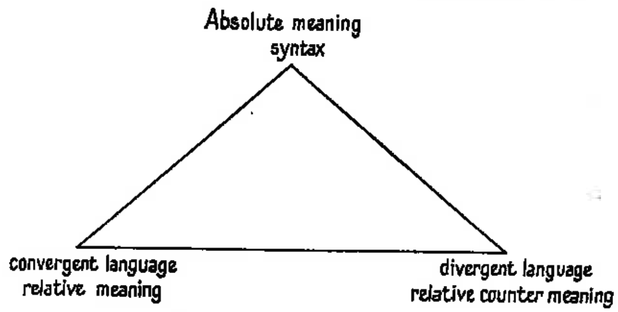
When my mind, in its totality, causes itself to be conditioned exclusively by one half of its nature, of this mental essence which is its nature, the attitude that I assume thus brings with it the conditioning of the whole by a part. This situation is felt as abnormal and enslaving. The enslavement is, however, an auto-enslavement, since it is my mind which refuses to be auto-conditioned and thus free. To the disciple who requested deliverance, the Zen Master replies: 'Who has enslaved you? No one but yourself. Why do you ask that you should be delivered?'

Our attachment to the convergent structure of our language constitutes the profound root of our attachment in general, manifested in relation to particular things. This affirmation may surprise us at first. But all attachment that I have for a particular thing is attachment to this thing in my mental world, to my mental representation of this thing, a representation which is inscribed and articulated in the convergent mental make-up to which I am attached. There is a whole hierarchy of attachments suspended to a principal attachment on which all the others depend. This principal attachment is attachment to convergent language; this is the 'hold' of which the Zen speaks when it tells us to 'let go'. The apparently absurd replies of the Zen masters offer us the greatest of lessons; they show us that the root of our apparent slavery lies in our intellectual functioning, in the way that we use language.

CHAPTER 16

TWO MENTAL AUTOMATISMS

Let us sum up first of all what we have seen in the preceding chapter. What I call my 'life'—the object of all my preoccupations, hopes and fears—is the world representation as it is created by my mind, thanks to my verbal intellect; my life is my verbal world. This world is constituted in a triangular way. At the



summit of the triangle is the syntactical structure of language, endowed with absolute meaning since it manifests directly the One principle. Below is convergent language, endowed with relative meaning, and divergent language, endowed with relative counter-meaning.

I am attached to my language of relative meaning; I am frozen around it. Therefore the two relative poles are in practice in opposition, one with the other; they are not conciliated. The absolute meaning of my universal perception of things escapes me. In the apparent absence of this absolute meaning, I seek to give to my life a relative meaning. I want this relative meaning to keep increasing in importance, I want it to occupy my whole life by eliminating the counter-meaning and thus attaining the oneness of the absolute. But the more sharp becomes the relative meaning of my life, thanks to the convergence of my interest on one aspect of the world, the more the opposing aspect—which necessarily exists in this dualist world—is in a parallel way

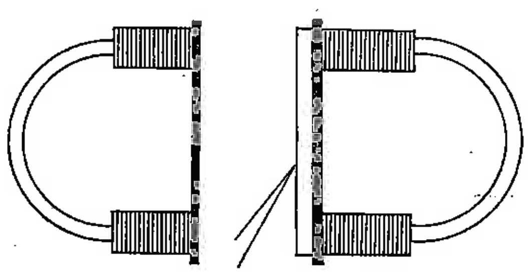
raised in value. The inevitable counter-meaning of my life increases with its meaning. A certain success is possible to me, but never such absolute success that time itself would no longer threaten it. In this vain pursuit of the unlimited, the inevitable failure threatens me to the degree that my success seems to reach its height. My claim for a perfect relative meaning introduces me into a world torn by contradictions.

Many thinkers have seen that man, by claiming a perfectly convergent aspect of his world, is creating his own unhappiness. But, while the problem is seen solely from this particular angle, one can only arrive at attitudes of 'wisdom' and moderation which diminish the acuteness of the dualist condition, but could never satisfy our need for the absolute. If we wish to escape the illusion of dualism—and not to content ourselves by blunting the point of the sword of Damocles—we must understand that the root of our unhappiness lies in our attachment to convergent language, the original attachment on which depend all possible attachments.

We come back to this point with an insistence which may appear heavy to certain readers. But this insistence is necessary for the majority of us. Our illusion of having dealings with the real outer world is so strong. Each of us believes so firmly that he perceives things as they are in themselves. To be sure, the opportunity is incessantly offered to us to ascertain that our inner states, our moods, are in charge of our view of things. But in spite of this evidence, we live persuaded that our problems are situated in the real world and not in a world representation, a verbal world. Words seem to us to be simply tools to designate things. We believe that we 'verbalize' during the course of our real contact with the outer world and we do not see that our language creates the world in which our life unfolds. Thus it is necessary to insist on the fact that our individual world is a verbal world and that the whole question of the painful dualism in which we struggle is summed up in the structural dualism of our language, in the functional dualism of the mind which creates our individual world.

We are going to try to show in what exactly our freezing around our convergent or 'meaningful' language consists. When I say that I am frozen around my convergent language, this does

not signify that my intellect is incapable of manufacturing the divergent language; in fact, it is capable of it; I can get rid of the discipline of meaning that my language normally imposes upon itself and allow this language to manufacture itself at will. I then see unexpected sentences come to my consciousness, such as these: 'The polyglot, decorated by influential fountains, burst through collections of blond chamois. Besides though robbers rise up because of the shock of the oppossum converted the countryside with the sad and preconceived manners. The gestation of the vaporous icepicks comes back towards Sorrento while needing firm during the armfuls of anemones priding themselves on the thousand frolics without success. The car of the buskins is too harsh womanly in order that the alleged understandings of the stanzas might be reddened on the sea-level of the calabashes of silk. Nearly all the ferrets eat each other with irritating slowness; they are very careful to take out the spines in order that the revenging aeroplanes cannot handle the involuntary assignment of the fly.' My normal freezing around convergent writing is not simply expressed by the fact that it is the only language I can create, but by the fact that I create it as though it were the only language possible. Its elaboration does not presuppose a choice, a wish; it is made by itself, it goes on its own. On the contrary I can allow divergent language to be elaborated in my mind without making it explicit, without making explicit my intention to do it.



In order to explain more clearly this delicate question we will use a physical illustration. We will compare our mind to a bit of iron suspended by a thread and situated between two electro-magnets. The iron is between two magnetic fields of equal intensity, the one created by the 'convergent' electro-magnet, the

other by the 'divergent' electro-magnet; it presents two opposed faces, orientated towards the two magnets. But this bit of iron is very special: it has the power of offering itself or not to the magnetic fields between which it is suspended. In our normal state of development, it offers itself exclusively to the action of the 'converging' magnet; therefore we see it in our diagram, stuck against this magnet. The functioning of our mind is thus unilateral, out of equilibrium; the development of its convergent modality alone is realized. This modality alone has become automatic; it alone has acquired the mastery that automatism confers (we shall come back later to the idea of automatism. We need say here only that automatism is the end product of a functional development; it confers independence, freedom. The pianist who has developed all the automatisms of his playing is independent of his technique and possesses full liberty for musical interpretation).

My intellect, by the development of its automatisms of convergence, has acquired half its freedom. But it still lacks the other half. Therefore the iron which represents it in our diagram is stuck against the 'convergent' magnet, a prisoner of its unilateral freedom. Its 'normal' situation, at the end of a complete development of its possibilities, would be exactly half-way between the two magnets, participating equally in their magnetic fields; at this point only would it be quite free.

In its normal state of development, my intellect is refused the action of the 'divergent' magnet. It is as if the bit of iron were covered, on its right side, by an insulating layer impermeable to magnetism. When I allow my mind to function in the divergent mode, I offer myself to the divergent magnetism, I diminish, little by little, the thickness of the insulating layer which covers the right face of the iron.

At my birth the iron was insulated on both its faces; it was then half-way between the two magnets, but excluded from their action. At the moment when intellectual consciousness appeared in me, the possibility was given to the iron of eliminating, little by little, its two insulating layers. But this possibility, because of the convergent vital force, was only used for the insulating layer on the left face, situated opposite the 'convergent' magnet. This process of 'disinsulation', of denudation,

of opening, was in operation from earliest infancy up to adolescence. As soon as the process started, the iron came into contact with the 'convergent' magnet, but without yet being pressed against it. To the degree that the convergent intellectual automatisms developed, the iron completed the denudation of its left face and was more and more compressed against the magnet. This pressure attained its definite maximum when, at about the age of adolescence, the convergent intellectual automatisms were completed; it has not been changed by what has followed.

If, by virtue of my understanding, I start now to develop my divergent intellectual automatisms, I attack the second half of my realization. I undertake the progressive denudation of the right face of the bit of iron. As long as this new process is not ended, the iron stays in contact with the 'convergent' magnet, but the pressure which sticks the iron against the magnet diminishes in intensity. It is only when the automatisms of divergence are completely developed, to the same extent as are those of convergence, it is only at this instant that the iron suddenly leaves the left magnet in order to take up its position half-way between the two magnets.

This illustration takes into account a certain number of important ideas about our realization. Realization, Zen tells us, is abrupt, sudden; the iron does not move little by little from the 'convergent' magnet towards the middle position; it moves thus all of a sudden, at the instant when the right face is as completely denuded as the left face. But this abrupt realization is necessarily preceded by a progressive 'counter-work'; it is progressively that the iron denudes its right side by developing, little by little, the automatisms of divergent language. Realization is the return to the origins, to infancy, to the innocence of the animals; the iron, denuded on both sides, comes back to the point at which it started, when it was insulated on both sides. In this sense, realized man becomes again like a child, but he differs from the child: the iron completely denuded, though it is situated at the same point as the iron completely insulated, now participates in the two magnetic fields of the cosmic mind. The 'satori-event' corresponds to the moment in which the iron has almost entirely denuded its right face and in which, as a consequence, its pressure against the convergent magnet is almost eliminated.

Once the iron has come back half-way between the two magnets it does not mean that the realized man speaks a new language. This man speaks the convergent language which corresponds to life and to the convergence of life; but he does so in a perspective in which the opposition of 'meaning' and 'counter-meaning' has disappeared; for this reason the realized man sees not only the relative meaning of his formal representation, but also the absolute meaning of the mental essence which presides over it.

As long as the convergent intellectual automatisms alone are developed, the iron is pressed against the 'convergent' magnet. This pressure which corresponds to our feeling of enslavement is not the result of convergence itself, but of the non-development of divergence. Average man is not enslaved, in as much as he is already half developed. He has the illusory impression of being enslaved by his actual development, by the semi-freedom which is his; but a freedom, even if only half developed, could not be enslavement. Our feeling of enslavement comes from the fact that we seek our accomplishment by persisting in the direction in which we have already gone during the first half of the task, while the second half requires an opposite direction; in this unaware state we believe that we have stumbled across an insurmountable obstacle. In reality there is no obstacle. Instead of incessantly coming back to work already done, we can harness ourselves to the necessary counterwork. It is as if the iron in our diagram, after having entirely denuded its left face, was suffering from being pressed against the 'convergent' magnet and was trying to denude yet more of its left face in order to remedy this pressure. The truth is that the pressure does not come from the fact that this face is insufficiently denuded, but from the fact that the right face has remained covered with its insulating layer. It happens also that man curses his intellect and holds it responsible for his unhappiness; he aspires to be saved through stupefication, like the iron aspiring to restore the insulating layer which formerly covered its left side. But this is impossible because evolution is progressive; it cannot be made to go backwards.

The development of convergent intellectual automatism is not

an enslavement at all; it is the first half of liberation. The development of the divergent intellectual automatisms will not create another automatism which will aggravate the first or be a substitute for it; it will be the second half of liberation.

Unaware man often sees the question of automatism the wrong way round; he becomes vexed when one speaks to him about the human creature as if he were an automaton; certain theories on our development make the half-developed man ashamed when told that he is an automaton. In reality the automaton is something in which lies the principle of its own movement; it is auto-conditioned and thus, to the degree that its automatism is developed, it is free. Average man is in an imperfect and painful condition, because his automatism is only realized in his convergent half while his real nature would permit him to realize it in his totality. The human being has in him all that is necessary for him to be the perfect automaton, to realize in himself the two aspects of the Yang-convergent and divergent—conciliated with the Yin in the Tao. He can realize in himself the absolute principle, the unconditioned, and be perfectly free, as a perfect automaton of his own principle.

Our diagram takes into account these ideas: the suffering of the iron does not come from the fact that it is attracted by the convergent magnet, but from the fact that it is attracted only by the convergent magnet and that it is thus crushed against it. When it is equally attracted by the divergent magnet, it will not be crushed by the two magnets at once; it will take up its place between the two, free from all pressure.

We can now understand more clearly what was said at the beginning of this book. There is not a question of a single inner realizing work, opposed to life which does not bring realization. Life is itself realizing work; it accomplishes the first half of our realization and is justly worthy of being called 'inner work'. But the second half of our realization implies an inner 'counter-work', and this is not hostile to the 'inner work', but is its *complement*, antagonistic only in a complementary sense. The inner counter-work—the acquisition of intellectual divergence—is not accomplished in opposition to life, but alongside of it. It is not a question of our struggling to destroy our actual attachment—which is essentially attachment to intellectual convergence—but of developing a counter-attachment which, with attachment, will realize non-attachment of liberty. (We are obliged to use this word 'counter', for lack of a better one, in order to express the idea of 'complementary and antagonistic', but this word ought not to evoke in any way the idea of conflict, or effort to destroy the enemy.)

We must also see that it is not a question of constructing the cosmic mind in us, of developing the 'normal' or perfect functioning of our intellect. This 'normal' functioning is not to be developed; it already lies in us as the principle of our actual functioning. It is a question of obtaining the enjoyment of the cosmic mind by developing the divergent functioning of our intellect, a functioning which is neither more nor less 'normal' than our convergent functioning, and which constitutes its necessary complement. I have not to develop the state of satori in me, and I do not have to work for my intemporal realization. I have only to complete the temporal realization of my intellect in such a way as to lose the impression of living in the 'outer shadows'. 'Inner work' and 'inner counter-work' are on the same plane. I do not have to mount, to climb to unknown levels of consciousness. I do not have to organize in me the struggle of the higher against the lower. What I have to do in order to complete the first half of my realization is very simple and lies on the plane of my daily intellectual function.

CHAPTER 17

'THE WORD'

Before we engage in a more detailed study of divergent and convergent language, let us notice that our normal convergent language is the instrument of our will to experience. By creating, thanks to this language, an egocentric world, I experience myself as 'being-absolutely-in-so-far-as-I-am-distinct', as 'first cause' of the world in which I live. I experience myself more or less positively or negatively, in joy or suffering, according to whether my world-representation turns out to be more or less beautiful-good-true or ugly-evil-false. In this egocentric world I vibrate in my very centre, I vibrate in being a whole and not in being an aggregate of parts, I experience an 'ideal' affective life as if the idea of my Self were entering into consonance or dissonance in contact with the outside world. When, on the contrary, my mind allows divergent language to be created in it, I experience nothing in the non-egocentric world which results from it. It does not put me into any affective state, but into a 'counter-state', antagonistic-complementary to all my normal affective states. My will to express myself in a divergent way is then the complementary-antagonistic of my will to experience. At the beginning of this work we saw the necessity for complete realization of the acquisition of a 'non-will-to-experience' in relation to our 'will to experience', but we did not then see exactly of what this 'non-will-to-experience' consisted. In order to understand this, we must return to the very source of experiencing, to the elaboration of our verbal world.

Let us study now the exact nature of convergent and divergent language, the way in which they are made and in which they function as well as their anatomy and physiology.

The two languages utilize the same elements, *words*, and it is the 'Word' that we must study first of all.

Considered in itself the Word is a *gesture*; like all gestures it necessitates a muscular activity and a mental activity. It is

executed by the muscles of the respiratory system, of the larynx, the pharynx, the muscles of the mouth and of the tongue; all these muscles, in so far as they are used in language, can be designated by the vocabulary of 'verbal musculature' (this musculature by the way is not in any way specific; mutes for example can speak with their hands). Before being executed by the muscles, the word-gesture is conceived by the mind. The mental image of the gesture precedes and determines the gesture. It is identical with what happens when I want to draw an S in the air with my finger; I conceive the mental image of it before executing it. The word is first of all a mental gesture. I can, furthermore, very easily pronounce the words in my mind without pronouncing them with my muscles. I can recite a poem to myself without moving any of my muscles. This shows us to what degree the functioning of the formal intellect resembles the muscular functioning.

But if the verbal gesture resembles, in one sense, any other gesture of our body, it is distinguished from them by its goal. The word is conceived essentially by the mind, not in order to produce certain muscular contractions, but in order to represent symbolically, according to a pre-established convention, a general concept.

If we stop looking at the word-gesture in itself in order to look at it as an element in the intellectual structure, we see it as a symbol, as *a form which evokes some informal thing*. The word 'table', for example, represents and evokes the informal essence of the mind in so far as this essence has given birth to all the particular images that the subject has had concerning 'table'.

We must here carefully define the ideas of 'informal', 'formal' and 'formlessness', without which the exact nature of the word would remain incomprehensible to us. All the images which appear in my mind are the formal manifestations of the essence of the mind which is itself informal. But what must we say of the material of memory, of the images which have been formed in my mind which are no longer actually there, but which persist there as mnemonic traces? I cannot consider them as informal; they are in effect the traces of something formal, of something which has definitely left the informal; and they act on the plane of phenomena, since they flow in upon my present formal thinking.

But I cannot, either, consider them as 'formal' in the same way as my mental image which is actually present. A current error is to consider the memory as a sort of cupboard in which the former images are stored and from which these images can be brought out by evoking the past. This is not so; when I evoke a memory, I have an actual image which resembles a former image—and of which the formation depends on this former image to a certain degree—but which is nevertheless entirely new. Even if the resemblance were perfect, the actual image would be new; the resemblance is not an identity. If I make a gesture which I have already made a thousand times, this present gesture is nevertheless entirely new. Suppose that, wanting to learn a text by heart, I remember it several times during the course of the day; each time, the text imprints itself anew on my memory; my memory well shows that each evocation of the text is a new mental form which adds its mnemonic traces to the former traces. A former image would never be able to reappear itself in my consciousness. Its own form would never come back to me. My memory is not a store of conscious forms. My memories are not 'formal'.

In all, the mnemonic trace is not informal and at the same time it is not a form which is momentarily hidden. Let us say that it is a 'shapeless' mental substance. It is like a liquid; water has no form of its own, it takes the form of the vase into which one pours it; but I would not be able to call it informal because it does not belong to the plane of principle, but to the plane of formal phenomena; it participates in this formal plane, but it has not a form of its own and that is why I call it 'formless'.

My memory can be compared to the sea and my present consciousness to the surface of the sea. At each instant, the wave has a form of its own while the sea beneath it has no form. At each instant, my consciousness has a mental form of its own while my memory has none.

We can now understand better the nature of the word. It is made of two parts; it brings with it a formal kernel, or centre, and a formless halo which surrounds this centre. The kernel is the present verbal image, the mental image of a symbolic gesture. The halo is the totality of memories which are associated with this verbal image. The kernel has a fixed form; we have said that

the word is an equation founded on the principle of identity, which itself is founded on the One principle; this fixity comes from the immutable One itself. The halo, on the contrary, is 'liquid' shapeless; it participates in the constant rearrangement of memory. The kernel is the same for all men who speak the same language at the same epoch; the halo, on the other hand, is different for each man, because the material of memory is different for each of us.

The halo of the word—the 'meaning' that it evokes—is *living*. Like all living things it is disintegrated and reintegrated incessantly. The kernel of the word, on the contrary, is non-living. It does not belong to that middle plane of the cosmos which is life, but to the two other planes at the same time, to the inanimate plane on the one hand and to the intellectual plane on the other. In so far as it is manifested mind, the kernel of the word is inanimate, like the stone, on this side of life; in so far as it plays its symbolic role, and calls its halo to life it is intellectual, beyond life.

One can easily ascertain that the word is a living creature by seeing its affective and evocative force. It is more difficult to understand in what way it is on the inanimate side of life. But it happens to all of us, on certain days, that we repeat a word to ourselves several times and see it emptied of its meaning (its halo evaporates) and we suddenly observe it in its starkness; this word then appears to us as bizarre, arbitrary, dried out and dead; at this moment we see its centre stripped of its creative dynamism of life and we see it as inanimate as a pebble.

The word 'expresses' the thought as an orange, under pressure, expresses its juice. The juice of the orange represents the shapeless, liquid halo of the word; the cellulose framework of the fruit represents the fixed centre of the word. The 'meaning' of the orange lies in its nourishing juice, not in its framework; the meaning of the word is in its halo, not in its centre.

What happens when I read a book? The text, coming out of a fixed plot, inanimate but animating, is laid on to the surface of my mental fluid, of my memory. Each of its words will awaken a certain part of my mind; each word will attract around it a certain living halo. Thus the book animates in me a whole mental world of emotions and of physiological phenomena; it is

at the same time an inanimate thing and a representative of the essence of the mind which generates life.

Some reflections on animal thinking will help us to understand better the nature of the word. The study of conditioned reflexes has shown, with proof, the existence of associations in the animal mind; the animal has associative thinking. Now it would not be able to see associations without having elements to associate. These elements, which correspond among animals to verbal ideas among men, we will call 'notions' and we will justify the use of this term.

The animal, we have said, if it does not 'experience', for lack of an intellect, 'perceives' and 'feels' like man. It perceives images which its mind fabricates in relation to outer stimuli. These images release mnemonic traces, or memory, in the animal. When it perceives a thing with which it has already been in contact, the image that the animal fabricates of the thing is then joined to all the mnemonic traces which are associated with it.

The present image constitutes a centre around which is grouped a halo of memories. The totality is not, as among men, an *idea* of verbal nature, but a non-verbal *notion*.

The notion in animal thinking brings with it, like the verbal idea among humans, a centre and a halo. It differs from the verbal idea, not by the nature of its halo, which is identical, but by the nature of its centre. Here the centre is not a word, not a phenomenon produced by the subject himself following a convention which is proper to him, but an image completely imposed on the subject by the outer world and by the nature of his means of perception. This centre is situated in life like its halo. The consciousness of a dog will only contain the notion of its master if life causes it to perceive this master or something which is associated with him.

We say that animal thinking is made up of *notions* because these elements represent a certain *knowledge* of the cosmos. But this thinking depends entirely on the unfolding of outer circumstances and is incapable of creating a world-representation proper to it. Because the kernels of animal notions belong to life, animal thinking cannot bring about any logical thinking founded on the One beyond life. This thinking is entirely 'fluid' and can contain no fixed identification. It can bring about complex associations, but not logical reasoning.

Thus we see the essential difference which exists between animal thinking and human thinking. The elements that these two thinkings utilize—non-verbal notions and verbal ideas—imply in a parallel way a halo and a centre, but they differ through the nature of their centre. The centre of the animal notion is of a vital nature and animal thinking remains entirely concrete and limited to the domain of the particular, of the individual. The combinations that this thinking can bring about with these notions are only associations which manifest in convergent movements of life. The centre of the verbal idea, on the contrary, has a non-vital nature, it is independent of the outer world and abstracted from life; it is situated in the general and universal domain. The combinations to which verbal ideas give rise are not only associative (we shall soon see furthermore in which way the associations differ from those of the animal), but identifying or logical. The fixed character of the word, the centre of the verbal idea, allows of fixed and immutable combinations; this is syntactical, algebraic structure, founded on the principle of identity. Because of this identifying structure founded on the One principle, human thinking creates a world proper to each thinking individual and a world possessing the same architecture as the cosmos. The world created by animal thinking, on the contrary, is only one particular abstraction of the cosmos and is not situated on the structural plane of the whole.

We will conclude this chapter by replying to a possible strong objection. We have said that the word, in so far as it is the centre of the verbal idea, is fixed, immutable. How are we to reconcile this affirmation with the multiplicity of idioms, and above all with the obvious fact that languages evolve with time? A comparison will help us to resolve this apparent contradiction: the laws promulgated by a society *fix* the rights and duties of the citizens; these laws are modified during the course of time; that is to say that the modalities according to which the legislator fixes the duties of each are modified, but that does not stop the laws from being fixed, immutable, at the moment in which they exist and in so far as they intervene in the life of a society. One can modify the conventions, which are the laws, and one can do

this under the influence of life, but each of these conventions is by nature fixed; the legal term, 'arrested', expresses this fact well. The laws are modified from time to time, but these changes go by fits and starts, by which one jumps from one fixity to another; they have nothing to do with vital evolution which consists in a continuous and incessant change. In the same way the conventions, which words are, are modified during the course of time, but they are nevertheless fixed for a given man at a given time. These conventions not only change with the centuries; from one chapter to another in the same book, I can use the same word, as may be fitting, and give to it a different meaning; this does not prevent me from fixing, each time, the acceptance of this word; nor does it prevent the centre of this word from possessing one nature, the One nature, fixed and immutable, of the universal. The thinking of many men is vague because they use words of which they have not defined, for themselves, the conventional significance. A rigorous thinking demands rigorous verbal conventions. The tool that the word constitutes for logical thinking is proper to its function to the degree that its essential nature is realized; and this nature is fixity, exactitude, and the immobility of a symbolic convention that man has made with himself.

CHAPTER 18

THE ASSOCIATION OF IDEAS

We are going to study now how words are assembled in our convergent language. This language brings with it two structures: the one is syntactical structure which it shares with divergent language; the other, proper only to convergent language, is associative structure.

Before studying the question of association between verbal ideas, it is necessary to understand clearly that syntactical structure is in no way associative; the relation that exists between the subject, the verb and the predicate of a sentence is not an association, but an identifying relation, the verb representing the identifying link between the subject and the predicate. What is identified in language, as syntax, is not the haloes of words, nor is it their centres, but the conventional identities which exist at the heart of words, between their centres and their haloes.

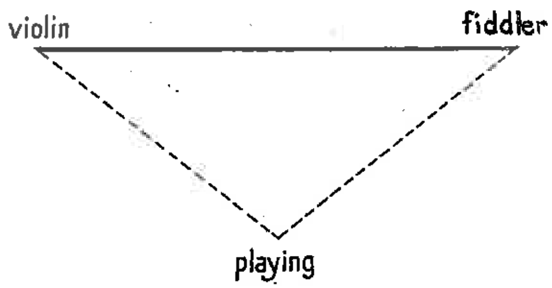
As we have already seen, the immutable identity which lies in the word characterizes neither its centre, which changes with time, nor its halo, which is living and ceaselessly rearranged. It characterizes the relation between the centre and the halo, whatever might be the momentary modality of the one or the other. These particular identities residing in words are those which are united in a general identity in syntactical structure.

Let us leave syntactical structure now in order to study associative structure which is proper to convergent language only. Associations can be made between the haloes of words or between their centres. The first are much more important and we shall start with them.

Associations between the haloes of words are of two kinds: *free* or *directed*. Before saying how these two kinds differ, let us show first what they have in common. The association of two verbal ideas rests on a partial identity of their haloes. For example the association 'violin-fiddler' is based on the ideas of 'playing' which exists in both the haloes of the two words; the

halo of the word 'violin' contains the idea that the violin is the instrument that the fiddler plays, and the halo of the word 'fiddler' contains the idea that the fiddler plays a violin. We see, then, that identity is not absent from associative relation, and this should not surprise us since the One principle is the father in the immanence of which the ten thousand things are twin sisters. But if identity is not absent from the associative relation, it is only partially present and this is why we must distinguish this relation from total syntactical relation.

Association is thus a triangular relation: the two words associated are tied together by an hypostasis which is the identical idea contained in the two haloes. We can make a diagram of this relation in the following way:

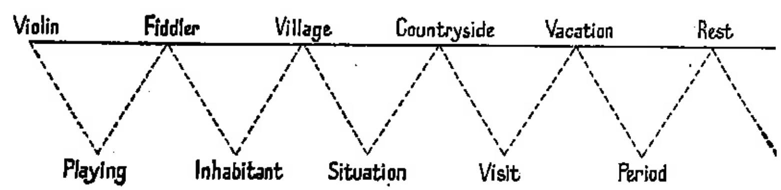


We should examine the hypostatic idea more closely. This idea, this image, constitutes the controlling part of the association. One could obviously say that the two words associated, thanks to the hypostasis, are also as indispensable as the latter in the constitution of the triangle. But, the associative triangle being essentially a union, a conciliation or a marriage, the hypostasis which unites, conciliates or marries, plays, in all this, an eminent role, superior to the role of the words joined together. In this triad, the first word is the active word; put first it has the initiative, it brings to life the second word; the second word is the passive force, it is brought to life by the first; and the hypostatic word is the conciliating force. The active force brings to life the passive force, but it does so by the life-giving, creative virtue which lies in the conciliating force, in the hypostatic idea common to both haloes. So this idea is truly the essence of the principle of the association.

When I understand this, it becomes evident to me that my attachment to the associative convergence of my language is essentially attachment to the hypostasis of my associations, to what is identical in them, to what represents, in them, the One principle.

Let us notice on the other hand that the hypostatic idea in my association is not conscious. I pass from the conscious idea of 'violin' to the conscious idea of 'fiddler' without being conscious of the idea of 'playing' which ties them together. The dynamic principle of my associative thought is not conscious. It is not therefore surprising that I feel that the word 'fiddler' *comes to me*, comes to my consciousness without my doing anything. Since I consider myself as being my consciousness and not my unconscious principle, the origin of my conscious images appears foreign to my Self; I have the impression that my ideas come to me as letters come to me in the post, an organism foreign to my organism.

The horizontal line in our diagram corresponds to the conscious aspect of the association. The two sides of dotted lines correspond to its unconscious aspect. We have drawn the triangle with its point below because we normally represent our unconscious to ourselves as a depth subjacent to our consciousness (the sea beneath the waves). The associations go as a continuous change, the second word of the first association constituting the first word of the following association. If I should think of, to begin with, the word 'violin' I can have the associations 'violin-fiddler-village-countryside-vacation-rest'. We can represent the associations with their hypostases in the following way:



The straight line which ties the associated words together represents the conscious part of my reverie; the dotted and zigzag lines, which pass through the hypostatic ideas, represent its unconscious part. The passage of my conscious thought is

brought about by jerks. I suddenly jump from the idea of 'violin' to the idea of 'fiddler' and from there to the idea of 'village' and so on. But the passage of my unconscious thought is continuous.

We see that our associative language brings with it a double process of which one part is associated and conscious, while the other is hypostatic and unconscious. We shall see soon that this double process is none other than the imaginative-emotive process of which our normal and inner monologue is made.

Let us examine, to begin with, what distinguishes the two varieties of association, the ones which are directive and the ones which are 'free'. The associations which are normally formed in my mind are more or less directive; my ideas turn around a subject which plays the role of directive idea. When I am in reverie, the subject of my reverie is often modified, I often pass from one directive idea to another, but, at each moment, the images of my film turn around an image which is their centre. In this case, the implicit hypostases of which we have seen the existence beneath the associated images are themselves tied together by a common and more general hypostasis. When I reflect on a question, the subject of my reflection is much more stable than are the subjects of my reverie; the common hypostasis can remain the same for a long time beneath my imaginative film. This hypostasis is implicit in so far as it is continuous, but it is explicit from time to time. My reflection, for example, while I am writing this chapter, carries from one end to the other the hypostatic idea of 'association'; this idea remains implicitly stable and it becomes explicit from time to time, each time that the word 'association' reappears in the text.

It is easy to see, in this 'directed' associative thinking, that my attachment to the convergence of language is essentially attachment to its implicit or unconscious hypostatic power. The directive idea of my associations, in so far as it lasts, is a fixed idea; it is to this that I am attached and not to the multiple conscious images which are born from it. All these images come to me in terms of the *interest* that I have for their directive idea.

Free associations are not normal; they suppose a certain effort of mental relaxation, of deconcentration or non-reflection; they necessitate, in practice, the intervention of another person. This person says a word to me, a word which I listen to and which I allow to resonate in me; and I pronounce, without thinking, the first word which then comes to my consciousness. In this case there is not, properly speaking, the directive idea; there is no general hypostasis. But there is a particular hypostatic idea as in all associations. Why is such an idea which has come to me associated and not another? The word which has been given to me brought its halo with it, a multitude of notions, and each of these notions would have been able, by identity, to hook up to the halo of another word and to make it come to my consciousness; that is to say that the halo of the given word would have been able to occasion the play of many hypostases, each one of them corresponding to a different associated idea. Why, then, has such a notion, contained in the halo of the given word, played the role of hypostasis to the exclusion of all the others? Because this particular notion was, for me, at the moment of the test, more affectively charged than all the others; of all the possible hypostatic ideas it was the one to which I was the most attached, the one which corresponded to the most intense convergence. Thus do my free associations teach me about the particular modalities of my general attachment in my representation of the world.

Free associations represent the most simple, the most elementary, convergent function of my thought. Convergence is really most *marked* in directed associations, even if I limit myself to reverie, since the hypostatic ideas are then centred around a directive idea. The least association is already a mental concentration, the elementary associative triangle concentrating the two associated ideas around the hypostatic idea. From this comes all the degrees of this concentration according to the amplitude of the fixed directive idea around which develops the elementary associations. Thus we can see that convergent language manifests with greater or less intensity our attachment to convergence, as well as this convergence itself.

We have said earlier that our associative thought brings with it a conscious, associated part and an unconscious, hypostatic part; it constitutes the double, 'imaginative-emotive' process of which our normal inner monologue is made. The two aspects, imaginative and emotive, of this process, are co-existent, but they are nevertheless distinct. Indeed it is to the implicit

hypostatic ideas that I am attached and not to the conscious images. In so far as I am conscious of my imaginative film, I am not attached, I do not experience, I am not moved; my conscious thinking is inaffective and purely intellectual. My thinking, on the other hand, affects me or moves me through the hypostatic ideas which are not formulated, and which lie beneath my associations and engender them; my thinking moves me in so far as it does not appear in my consciousness. In all, the invisible half of my associative language alone is emotive, while its visible half is purely intellectual. If I have the impression that the images of my film affect me, it is because I illusorily confuse them with the hypostatic ideas which bring their appearance to life and which I do not see.

Let us devote a short paragraph to the associations which are made, not this time between the haloes of the verbal ideas, but between their centres. These are 'alliterations', such as: 'part-paragraph-paragon', or 'vengeance-tolerance-essence' or 'charity-parody-parity'. Here the hypostasis is not a notion belonging to the haloes of the associated words, but to a part of the word-gesture itself. These associations are in some way 'muscular'; they bring with them a partial identity in the verbal gesture. It is useful, in order to understand better the nature of our imaginative film, to come back to animal thinking. The association of this thinking also are made between the haloes of the notions and between their centres. The associations between the haloes closely resemble those which we have studied among men. After experiencing it, the notion that a dog has of the whip brings with it, in its halo, the memory of suffering; this memory will play the role of hypostasis bringing to life an associated notion, that of 'flight' or of 'grovelling on the ground and trembling', or another. But the associations between the centres of the animal notions differ from those among men since these centres are not fixed verbal images, but moving mental images based on the present outer reality. These associations are only different from the development of outer circumstances in so far as they are perceived by the mind of the animal. The animal has not, like man, two sorts of imaginative film, the one based on reality and the other invented; it has only one film based on reality, either the present reality (associations between the centres of notions

or circumstantial development) or on past reality (association of the haloes of notions). The associations of an animal can concern nothing but that which he is in the process of living, or that which he has affectively lived. Man, on the contrary, although he has an imaginative film based on present or past reality in the same way as the animal, can create an invented imaginative film, probable or improbable, according to his fancy. The fact of possessing the arbitrary conventions which words are, allows man to invent associative combinations independent of the real circumstances of life. But if we examine convergent human language more closely, we see that the essential difference which separates it from animal thinking is not what we have just said. What characterizes our convergent language above all, comes from the co-existence in itself of the intellectual logical structure and of the vital associative structure.

Before having verbal intellect, the baby has the pre-logical thinking of the animal. When the intellect has appeared, and when its automatisms of convergence are developed, the pre-logical thinking persists beneath the new logical thinking; it persists in the hypostatic ideas which underlie the aspirations of logical thinking.

'Normally'—that is to say with the man in whom the intellectual possibilities, divergent as well as convergent, are developed—pre-logical thinking and logical thinking would function on two separate planes. Pre-logical thinking would constitute a lower psychic system which would be practical and would correspond to the plane of individual life, that is to say to a limited part of the cosmos. Logical thinking would constitute a superior psychic system which would be theoretical and would correspond to the universal plane, to the cosmos in its totality. The relation which would exist between these two systems would be similar to that which we have seen between the cortical cell and the medullary cell in the elaboration of the muscular gesture. Logical thinking would control by inhibition, animal thinking, and thus behaviour would be cosmically ordered, adapted to the cosmic totality; that is to say that behaviour would be entirely intelligent or reasonable. This man would really be a rational animal.

But with man as we know him, only one half of the

intellectual automatism is developed. Because of this, the superior psychic system is incapable of playing its normal role, of functioning on the plane which dominates that of animal thinking. It functions to be sure, but, in place of having the initiative and of actively controlling animal thinking, it is caught up in the impetus of this thinking and functions, in some way, after it. Thus our normal inner monologue manifests not true reason, but rationalizations released by our affective life. Our likes and our dislikes release, in our logical thinking, what 'must be' and 'what must not be'; our relative preferences release partialities, absolute judgments. We are continually wondering 'what we ought to do', in place of wondering 'what we will do'. The notion of 'ought' is substituted for that of 'will'. From this there results a rigid systematized and constrained behaviour.

It is possible, however, even with our incomplete development, to have reasonable thinking, and independent intelligence. In fact, beside our affective wills, there exists, as we have seen, a 'will to understand for the sake of understanding'; the man in whom this special will is realized can have pure intellectual intuitions which teach him correctly. But this thinking, the most reasonable that we can have at present, cannot assume its normal initiative and does not control our life.

This subordination of our logical thinking to our animal, or vital thinking, explains to some degree the impression of enslavement that we have during our inner monologue.

CHAPTER 19

THE EXPRESSION OF THOUGHT

We return now to our attachment to intellectual convergence and to the consequences which flow from it. To do this, we shall consider again the mental transformation which is produced among human beings when they pass from the state of being a baby, without intellect, to that of a child, and then to the state of an adult endowed with verbal thinking.

The baby has animal thinking, which is pre-verbal and pre-logical. The notions in this thinking are made of centres and haloes. The centres are mental images based on reality; they depend on the outer world and are conditioned by it. The haloes are the mnemonic traces associated with the central images; they manifest the memory proper to the subject and are then, in a sense, auto-conditioned.

Both the centres and the haloes of this thinking are moving, fluid, like life itself. The haloes are like those of the adult, while the centres are quite the opposite, because they are based on reality which is itself moving.

This thinking, in its two aspects, participates in the dual structure of life; it contains convergence and divergence at the same time, in the same way that life contains them. In this way the baby, like the animal, resembles completely developed man, the man of satori. But there is a big difference. The fact is that, in this non-intellectual thinking, convergence and divergence are not autonomous, isolated from one another; they are intimately mixed up in a primordial chaos; they are in a potential state, in a primordial and unique mental substance. It is only later that they are able, thanks to intellect, to become autonomous, isolated and purified, to take their places one opposite the other. Then only, their conciliation, very different from their confusion, will make the synthesis of intellectual thought which is completely developed.

We have said that the thinking of the baby is auto-conditioned

in so far as it is memory (haloes of notions). But the auto-conditioned aspect depends on the aspect which is conditioned by the outer world. The imaginative film of the baby, like that of the animal, depends on outer circumstances and physiological sensations; the baby cannot invent a film according to his fancy. Therefore the thought of the baby when all is said and done, is entirely conditioned by the non-mental; the auto-conditioning of memory is annulled by the fact that it depends, in its activity, on non-mental phenomena. It is just because this conditioning is complete that it cannot be accompanied by any impression of enslavement; because, in this situation, the baby cannot be aware of the fact that its thinking is conditioned.

Then the child, from about the age of two or three years, gains access to the plane of general intellectual ideas, these being manifested by the power of establishing symbolic conventions between verbal gestures and general ideas, that is to say by language. Thanks to words, the thinking of the child takes a form which allows his mind to perceive its own activity in a 'subjective-objective' perspective.

At this time, the dual character of thinking becomes the object of consciousness. It is at this moment that the vital preference for integration-convergence is extended to a partiality for psychic convergence, for convergent language. In the same way that animal thinking needs, in order to function, definite objects which can be grasped and which give an apparent permanence, and thus rests on a coherent outer world, so intellectual thinking needs to rest on a definite world-representation which is coherent and which presents an apparent permanence, an apparent 'meaning'.

Dual animal thinking, which was functioning until now, cannot be in itself, an acceptable object for the intellect. Because of the fusion that it brings about between convergence and divergence, it is a useless object for the functioning of the intellect; being useless, it is destructive and therefore intolerable. So the child makes the division between divergence, which he refuses, and convergence which he accepts and uses. It is only later, when the intellectual convergence is well established on solid automatisms, that divergence can be approached.

What we have just said is so important for the understanding

of our present mental functioning that we are going to say it again in a slightly different way.

The thinking of the baby is completely moving, fluid; it lacks the immutability which will lie in words, in the relation of identity existing between the centre of the word and the halo. This fluid thinking manifests, at the same time, integration and disintegration; it is born and dies at each instant, in the same way as do life and the material organism. For lack of ability to conceive abstract ideas of 'life' and 'death' in general, the baby wants what will favour his life (particular and ever changing things), but he does not yet want his life (general and immovable ideas).

When the intellect appears, the child conceives general ideas of 'life' and 'death'. Then he wants his life and refuses his death, he wants integration and refuses disintegration.

On the somatic or gross level, the child perceives his body; he perceives it as a manifest integration which develops with noticeable powers. At each instant, it has precise, describable and apparently stable forms, which *assure* the child of his 'being' and *reassure* him against his nothingness. On the psychic or subtle level, on the contrary, pre-verbal thought offers no apparent stable form which can be grasped and which would affirm the psychic being and deny not-being; this thought denies itself at the same time as it affirms. It constitutes an indescribable world because it disorganizes itself as fast as it organizes itself.

Language will constitute a symbolic integration which will confer on the psychic world a fixed, algebraic and solid structure. The haloes of the notions remain fluid, but their centres are immobilized. In expressing his thought verbally, the child fabricates a mental structure in which the fixed is separated from the moving. This verbal expression is an exorcism because it partially eliminates the ungraspable movement which, in its totality, appears disruptive. Fluid thought loses its former fearful aspect and assumes, thanks to language, a reassuring, affirming aspect.

When the intellect appeared, the child acquired the power of being consciously the unconditioned, the absolute principle. From this moment it is intolerable for him to see himself conditioned from outside. By the expression of its thought the mind

of the child is auto-conditioned by fabricating a world for himself alone. He thus gains for himself the impression of being the unconditioned which conditions the world.

But the world that the mind of the child thus conditions is not the objective world; it is a subjective world whose creation corresponds with the claim to 'be-absolutely-in-so-far-as-I-am-distinct'. Therefore this world, created in terms of a particular individual, is created according to the vital mode which governs the individual and which brings with it partiality for integration as opposed to disintegration. It is a world which is only convergent, centred upon the 'I-reality'. Language does not appear with its threefold nature-syntactical, convergent and divergent structures—but only with a syntactical-convergent structure. It is only 'meaningful'.

What happens is that the child rids himself of animal thinking by expressing it through mental contractions which are verbal gestures. This expression immobilizes the living centres of notions and they become verbal ideas in a sort of 'mummified' way. With these word-mummies, intellectual thinking constructs a fictitious world which is only convergent.

This process is quite normal. What is not normal is that it should stop there. Once the convergent intellectual automatisms are well established, language ought to acquire automatisms for its divergent functioning in order that intellect, having developed all its possibilities, may at last create, not a fictitious, subjective world, but the real objective world.

We can now see the relative liberty that the functioning of convergent intellect confers on man. With animals, and also the human baby, the mental associations conditioned by nature in the psychomotive system end in bodily gestures, in behaviour. Because the vital dynamism gives a vital force to this conception, every gesture conceived in the psychomotive system is immediately executed by the body. In some dangerous situation, the animal whose associations suggest the behaviour of flight, counter-attack or immobility, is obliged to flee, or counter-attack, or remain immobile.

Language makes it, for man, a different story. Language is a symbolic motive power, contained in verbal gestures, which transcends the animal motive power spread throughout the body.

The motive power of the mind transcends the motive power of the body. While the mental associations of the animal complete themselves, of necessity, in the execution of bodily movements, those of man must complete themselves in the conception and execution of mental gestures. It is mental motive power which, for man, is conditioned by Nature in his psychomotive system. This motive power constitutes a hiatus which protects the motive power of the body against the direct action of Nature. The intellectual mind can absorb and deaden the shock of Nature and avoid its manifestation in behaviour. In a dangerous situation in which my mental associations conceive the idea of flight, they do not necessarily cause me to flee; they must, of necessity, bring about the conception and mental execution of the *idea* of flight and, among all the possible ways of behaving in this situation, it is the idea of flight which is first imposed upon me. But this concept, or mental gesture, can deaden the shock of the vital dynamism and thus avoid being accompanied by the corresponding physical behaviour. I can *suspend* this behaviour, evoke the probable consequences which would flow from it, evoke the consequences of other ways of behaving, and thus bring into play associations more complete than those which resulted solely from immediate circumstances; and I can come to conceive a behaviour different from flight; a behaviour which, in the end, I adopt.

This faculty of suspension, given to me by my intellect, obviously represents a relative freedom. It permits me to make associations intervene which the immediate situation does not release in the determinism of my behaviour. My behaviour, instead of corresponding only to what I experience in the present moment, adjusts itself to all sorts of former experiences; it does not express only what I am by relation with the present circumstances, but a certain synthesis of myself.

But the motive power of my mind, though it protects my bodily motive power from a direct conditioning by Nature, is itself conditioned directly and rigorously by Nature. As we have seen, this conditioning is felt as constraining as long as the complete development of my mind has not identified me with Nature. Man endowed with intellect is, in reality, totally free, but he can only enjoy a relative freedom as long as his intellectual possibilities remain half realized.

CHAPTER 20

THE HYPNOTIC NATURE OF OUR ORDINARY ATTENTION

The real fact is that I am absolutely free, but in practice everything happens in me as if I were not; and this is because of my present attachment to my convergent mind. We shall devote this chapter to the study of our apparent slavery.

In me, a human being, the vital dynamism no longer acts directly on the motive power of my body, but on the motive power of my mind, on the fabrications of the imaginative film.

The more deeply concerned circumstances are with the 'vital struggle' which opposes the 'I-reality' to the 'menace' in me, according to the way I dramatize things, the more strongly my vital dynamism comes into play and therefore the more strongly does the motive power of my mind come into play.

Because of the hiatus between mental motive power and physical motive power, it often happens that my body does nothing, that no bodily activity results from the movement of my mind. Often the imaginary debate which causes the faculty of suspension to act is very complex; absolute and contradictory desires are here opposed in an irreconcilable manner and there is no possibility of reaching a decision to adopt any kind of behaviour. I do nothing; at least, if I do anything, it will be nothing adapted to the real circumstances. (I may walk up and down, lighting cigarettes which I put out immediately.) In these circumstances, my mental movement is not an activity but an agitation. For lack of physical action designed to modify present circumstances, this process of mental agitation is undertaken for its own sake. My imaginative film effectively gets rid of the fearful currents of my subconscious informal thinking by expressing its single convergent aspect, but this effectiveness is of value only for the moment; the associative, convergent film, while it gets rid of these currents, brings with it an informal dynamism (the non-conscious hypostatic images) which supports the

movement of the informal thinking which one is trying to eliminate. The remedy supports the illness at the same time as it neutralizes it. A vicious circle is established in which my thinking is felt to be imprisoned.

We are going to show with greater precision the nature of this apparent prison and how our attachment to mental convergence makes our thinking into an *hypnotic* condition.

My 'will to live', the will to integration with the refusal of disintegration, is expressed in my life by the will to convergence with the refusal of divergence. I am attached to the convergence of my mind, not simply because I will it, but because I will it to the *exclusion* of divergence. In fact, it is not to my convergent thinking that I am attached, but to the convergence of my thinking.

Because of this attachment, my consciousness does not *receive* my convergent thinking, but *takes* it. Yet at the same time my consciousness is *taken by* my convergent thinking. How are we to understand this? In reality, the activity of my consciousness, under the influence of my 'will to live', does not consist in seizing mental convergence, but in actively and exclusively offering itself to the convergent magnetic field of the essence of the mind. Let us recall the illustration of the bit of iron between the two magnets. If my consciousness would offer itself to convergence without refusing divergence, it would receive convergent thinking without being stuck to it. But because it offers itself to convergence and refuses divergence my consciousness is taken and enslaved by convergent thinking. Its relation with formal thinking, instead of being a consent, is an adherence which constrains it. In this adherence, my consciousness perceives the present mental image as if this image were the only possible one, because it loses sight of the indefinite possibilities of all the other images.

Certainly, if there were a consent and not an adherence, I would only be conscious of the present mental image, but for the same reason that I might be conscious of any of the other possibilities; I would be conscious of the present image not as *distinct* from the others, but as it manifests, *like the others*, the single essence of the mind. That is to say that I would be conscious of the essence of the mind in the consciousness that I would have

of the present image; I would be conscious of the clay in my object of clay.

Because there is adherence, I am only conscious of the present image and in no way conscious of the essence of the mind of which this image is really the direct manifestation. Everything happens, then, as if the present image awakens my consciousness to itself alone and causes it to be asleep to the possibility of all the other images, asleep, that is to say, to the essence of the mind which contains them all. My partially convergent thinking is *hypnotic* thinking. My consciousness is in the position of a man put to sleep by a hypnotist. The hypnotist puts his subject to sleep to all things except the words that he speaks. The usual consideration of the hypnotic state as a sleep is mistaken; it is in reality an exclusive awakening, an awakening which makes nothing of all to which it is not devoted.

This hypnotic relation between my consciousness and the present mental image, is my present *attention*. My present attention is thus attached, at the same time captor and captive. It is captor in so far as it results from the exclusive wish for mental convergence; it is captive because the magnetism of convergence, not balanced by that of divergence, immobilizes my consciousness, sends it to sleep, and closes it to all that has not the particular form of the present mental image.

We have seen, at the beginning of this book, that all perception is identification with what is perceived because, through resonance, the perception is a vibration in the subject which is identical with the vibration of the object. When I perceive the present mental image in my consciousness, it is by virtue of the identity existing between the vibration of the present mental image and the essence of the mind immanent in each of its manifestations. I am then identified with the present mental image.

Because my present attention is attached to its object, and at the same time captor and captive, my identification with the unfolding of my formal thinking is of the nature of hypnosis and I experience it as enslaving. I am then tempted to curse this identification while holding it responsible for my pretended enslavement; I am tempted to struggle against it. We are going to show that this attempt results from an inexact understanding

and that it takes us along a dangerous road, opposed to that of our normal complete development.

The hypnotic state which I am in today, a state which deprives me of the consoling conscious perception of the essence of the mind, is certainly, subjectively speaking, very annoying. But my unhappiness in no way consists in my identification with my formal thinking; it consists in the fact that this identification. which is normal, concerns the present mental image *exclusively*. It is this exclusive character which prevents me from seeing the essence of the mind in the present image, it is what deprives me of identification with this very essence, an identification which would overcome the dualism 'subject-object', since what would perceive the essence of the mind would be this essence itself, the principle of all my perceptions. My identification, without ceasing to be, would cease to be exclusively realized in the particular mental image which is present; I would be completely developed, the man of satori; I would have dual perceptions, but not dualist; I would not confuse the object that I look at with my own organism, but I would see no opposition between them because I would see the primary identification at the same time as their manifested differences.

Identification with present thinking is only wrong because of its limited and particularized character; everything happens, then, as if the essence of the mind, the whole, is conditioned by a part. Our attention, before satori, is always captivated; in these conditions unhappiness arises, not from the fact that our consciousness occupies a prison, but from the fact that it does not, at the same time, occupy the whole cosmos of which this prison is nevertheless a part.

Let us examine a certain consequence of our present hypnosis. When my consciousness has been captured for a certain length of time by some spectacle or other, or by a reverie, it happens that the thread of my consciousness is broken and I am aware, *a posteriori*, of the mental activity which has just taken place in me. I then have the impression that, during this time that I was thinking without being aware of the fact that I was thinking, I was as if absent from myself; and I have also the impression that I have now come home to myself and am present to myself. Let us see how this is explained. If my attention were to lose its exclusive

attached character, I should perceive the essence of the mind in perceiving the present mental image, and I should not localize this perception either outside or inside myself, since the essence of the mind, the principle of all that I perceive, is at the same time the subject and the object; it is a centre situated everywhere and nowhere; it cannot be located. While my attention keeps its attached character, I necessarily have the impression, on the contrary, that my consciousness is localized somewhere. When the perceived object concerns the outer world, I have the impression, *a posteriori*, that my consciousness was outside my head. When the object perceived consists in the mental functioning itself, I have the impression that my consciousness resides in my head. I am then tempted to believe that I always ought to feel my consciousness as seated in my head, that its 'normal' location is there, and that I am at fault, alienated from myself, when my consciousness is outside. This is a misunderstanding; in the first place I am not 'at fault' when my consciousness appears located here or there; this impression is only the sign of an incomplete development of my intellect, of an evolutionary stage which normally precedes complete development. On the other hand, there is no significant difference between the location of my consciousness inside or outside my head; it is not the fact that I locate my consciousness at one point rather than another that is the sign of my incomplete development, but that I locate it anywhere.

I make a grave mistake if I condemn anything which is already realized in me, if I condemn my identification with my present formal thinking, and if I try to destroy this identification. It is more intelligent to adhere to what is already realized and to work to acquire what is still lacking.

If I make this error of condemning my present captor-captive attention, I fall into a second error: I conceive the possibility of an illusory 'voluntary' attention which I decide to cultivate in order to be a substitute for the captivated attention. In reality there is not an involuntary attention and a voluntary attention. The present captor-captive attention is already voluntary, since it expresses precisely my exclusive will for convergence; all that one can say is that the attention of man who is not completely realized expresses an exclusive will, while that of the man

completely realized, will express a will which is not exclusive. On the other hand, the attention that I can have in life before satori is necessarily captivated because it is necessarily captor. We are going to show that the attention called 'voluntary' is always a captivated attention, but that it is burdened with a dangerous complication.

We have just recalled that even my ordinary attention is voluntary, since it expresses my exclusive will for mental convergence. But the expression of this will by my ordinary attention is not explicit; it comes into play without my being aware of its doing so. So I have the impression, when I think about it later, that my consciousness was captivated, in spite of itself, by the imaginative film. When, on the contrary, I make attentive efforts which are called 'voluntary', my exclusive will for mental convergence is explicit; I am aware of this will at the same time as it is brought into play and I then perceive an outside object, not simply in order to perceive it, but in order to perceive my mental functioning on the occasion of an outer perception; I feel my consciousness localized in my head, although I perceive the outer object. I have the impression that my attention, normally captivated, has become the captor (being active instead of passive). In reality my ordinary attention was already captor, and my so-called 'voluntary' attention is still captive, but in this case it is captive in a more complicated way which aggravates my actual condition.

Let us take a concrete example: I am in a waiting room; if look at the room with my ordinary attention, the objects which are there attract my attention, retain it more or less according to the interest that they awaken in me, with complete suppleness and spontaneity. If I make so-called voluntary efforts of attention, by wishing to keep the impression that my consciousness is localized in my head, I perceive the objects while perceiving that I perceive them, I see while telling myself that I see. My pretended 'active' attitude, substituted for my ordinary passive attitude, expresses a double claim in place of a single one; I claim first of all, as usual, the present mental image based on the outer object; and beyond this, I claim the mental image of myself claiming the outer object. The second inner image is the end in relation to which the outer image is a means. I have the impression, then,

of being delivered from a slavery which, with ordinary attention, the outer object was inflicting on me; I feel my consciousness located in my head and proudly defying the outside world. But the apparent slavery that the outer world was inflicting on me is replaced by that inflicted on me by the fixed image (*idee fixe*) of myself perceiving the outside object. In place of giving myself up to hypnosis without knowing it, I give myself up to it with the knowledge that I am doing so (while pretending, now, to be awakened). But my state remains hypnotic; it is so in an even more regrettable way because the hypnotizing image (the image of myself perceiving outer objects) is fixed, immobilized by an intellectual contraction, while the hypnotizing images in ordinary attention succeed each other with the movement of life. My thought, in so-called 'voluntary' attention, remains on the plane of life (that is to say that it is ruled by the exclusive claim for convergence), but of a life opposed by the immobilization of the captivating image. Believing that, by making an effort to leave the plane of life, I will go towards a higher level, towards pure intellect. I have really made an effort to go towards the lower, towards the inanimate. In fact, this effort is in vain; life could not possibly go towards the inanimate; but, though I do not succeed in thus diminishing in myself the half of realization that life has already brought with it, yet I am in opposition to the 'counter-work' necessary to complete my realization and I run the risk of disturbing, more or less seriously, the automatisms of convergence. We shall return to this risk when we study, in general, the effects of exercises in concentration.

CHAPTER 21

NON-CONVERGENT LANGUAGE

We have seen that, if we get our mind to speak without directing its discourse on to any particular subject, a language is elaborated with syntactical structure, but it does not give us any 'sense'.

For the production of this non-convergent language, it is preferable to write. I could obviously allow my non-convergent discourse to be done simply in my head, but the controlling work which we are going to discuss would be less rigorously done. Writing is an aid which is useful in our thinking, whether this be convergent or non-convergent.

So I write the first word which comes to mind, then the correct syntactical sentence which comes in its wake. When this sentence has been completely developed, I make another sentence come to me and so on. An essential characteristic of non-convergent language is that it is not associative; the words are only tied together by syntax. For this purpose, it is necessary that I should not hear the meaning of the word which comes to me; I must obviously listen to it (otherwise I would not be able to take conscious hold of it and write it), but I must not hear it; that is to say that I must not let it resonate in me with its halo charged with 'meaning'. We shall explain in detail, during the course of the following chapter, this important distinction between listening and hearing. It will be sufficient for us, for the moment, to understand that when I hear a word I hear not only its living centre, but also its living halo; all the informal notions which are charged with affectivity, and which make up this halo, awaken in me and tend to bring to life by convergence a new word associated with the first. If I hear the word which comes, it brings to life the following word because it determines the following word through association. I must, then, listen to the word which comes to me and not hear the sense.[1] I must not

[1] In French the word '*entendre*' means both to hear and to understand and hearing and understanding presuppose an associative convergence.

even hear its kernel, the sound of the word; if I did hear it the following word could be associated with it by alliteration, or else the same word would be able to come back obstinately to my text, associated with itself through repetition. In all there are three types of associations which it is important to avoid by not hearing the word: the associations of meaning, those of consonance, and those of repetition.

To listen to words which come to me in such a way as to be able to write them, and to compose them into correct syntactical sentences, and without hearing and understanding them, such is the essential characteristic of the non-convergent functioning of the intellect. Therein also lies its great difficulty. My automatisms of convergence, which alone are developed in me today, are expressed in me through the normal hearing and understanding of my formal thinking. I hear and understand it because, usually, I want to hear and understand it in order to 'experience', in order to feel myself condition my world representation. Therefore it is impossible for me, at the moment at which I begin the initial experiment in non-convergent language, to succeed perfectly in it. What has to be realized is nothing less than the 'letting go' that Zen speaks of, this completely new 'doing' which is a 'not-doing'. The 'hold' that I must let go is the inner gesture of contraction by which I hear and understand my formal thinking; it is my captor-captive attention. I cannot succeed immediately because success supposes the full possession of non-convergent automatisms; this full possession I have, as yet, only in embryo and it is precisely this that I want to acquire. A patient effort is necessary, an effort which is quite new, an effort of non-contraction of the mind, of non-attention, lacking in egoistic claims.

At this beginning stage, non-convergent writing is awkward; it often happens that I hear and understand the word which comes to me and then the word which follows it is associated with it in one way or another. In order to resist this, I reject the associated word, I do not write it, and I wait for another. During this time, I am released from the word which I heard and understood; the vibratory resonance which it has produced in me is deadened and its affective wave subsides. To the degree that this is accomplished the chances are increased that the following

word will not be associated. But these non-associative efforts must be made with moderation. If I tried to force myself to succeed in writing, immediately, a text which is perfectly non-associative, I would block my mind by trying the impossible. If I want to make a start in this new intellectual functioning, I must admit my present imperfection and have a certain indulgence for my *faux pas*, an indulgence, that is to say, for a certain number of associations. What matters, in this 'inner counter-work', is not the non-convergence of the text produced, but the effort that I make to produce a non-convergent text; it is not necessary, for this effort to be profitable, that it should be crowned with complete success.

The way the automatism of non-convergence is acquired is similar to the way that the convergent automatism is acquired. When I do an English essay or a Latin translation, the real goal is not for the copy to be perfect but the effort that I make to learn intellectual convergence. If I were to force myself, from the start, to do perfect work, I would stifle all the learning period.

One cannot insist too much on the fact that the non-convergent text which is written little by little on the paper has no importance in itself. It is useless to read it; this reading can teach me nothing. What teaches me something is only the effort of mental non-contraction that I have made in writing it.

But if, through curiosity, I read what I have just written, I notice that, to the degree that I have succeeded in not hearing the words which came to me, this text has left me no memory. I recognize the words that I have not been able to stop myself from hearing, but those which I have succeeded in not hearing surprise me; I do not remember having thought them. In fact, there is memory only if there is experiencing; mnemonic traces presuppose affective vibrations. Bergson has defined consciousness as memory and he was right in so far as consciousness functions in a convergent mode. But consciousness can function in a non-convergent mode and then it is non-memory.

One might be tempted, in order to make a radical break with the habit of intellectual convergence, to let go even of the syntax, and the usual form of words (by creating arbitrary words). This would be an erroneous way; if one continued it right up to

its conclusion, one would come to having the mind create a language less and less articulated, a jabbering, in which language as such would be destroyed. It is not a question of destroying the verbal functioning of the intellect, but of acquiring its non-convergent verbal function. Syntactical structure, common to convergent and non-convergent language, is in no way abandoned and is even quite necessary. All, in our usual language, that represents the One principle—syntactical structure and the stability of conventions which are the normal words—must be respected.

Non-convergent language poses a question for us: if the words which come to my consciousness are not determined by associations, what are they determined by? Why does such a word come to me, at such a moment, rather than another? Nothing happens in this world except by virtue of a certain determinism. If it is not convergent determinism which is at work in my intellect, how are we to understand what is happening?

This question is at first disconcerting. We are so in the habit of considering only associative determinism that we are tempted to believe it is also the origin of our non-convergent language. We are quite happy to admit that the associations may be deeply buried in the psyche, but we should be hard put to admit they do not exist at all.

There are, however, two different determinisms which are at work in our mental microcosm, as there are in the macrocosm. We are going to show the existence, at the level of the microcosm, of these two determinisms of which the one is convergent-divergent, while the other is non-convergent-non-divergent.

The cosmos is a whole which contains the ten thousand particular things and is manifested in them. From the analytical way of looking at things, which is that of our intelligence, the cosmos then appears in two ways—on the one hand, in a general way, as the whole, and on the other hand, in a particular way, as multiplicity. When I regard the cosmos as multiplicity, the determinism that appears there presides over the individual becoming of each thing, over the phenomena of integration-disintegration which are produced in each thing according to its nature and according to the influences to which other things subject it. This determinism, since it presides at the integration-

disintegration of things, is convergent-divergent. It brings with it *multiple laws* (physical, chemical, biological, etc.) which I understand or am able to understand, and which enable me to understand the 'how' of each particular phenomenon. Understanding and convergence go together; I understand a phenomenon by associating it with another in a convergent way; this determinism enables me to understand phenomena because it brings with it a convergent aspect.

If I envisage, on the contrary, the cosmos as the whole containing multiplicity, the determinism which is apparent to me no longer concerns each thing in its particularity, in its individual becoming, but *the meeting of things*, a meeting which influences the individual becomings of things that meet together. This determinism does not lie in the becoming, but in the general cosmic movement which engenders the becoming; it presides over permanence lying behind impermanent phenomena. Thus it implies *a single law, a statistical law*. I can understand this law, but I cannot, because of it, understand some particular meeting which depends on this law. This law, in fact, pertains to universal permanence—which is neither convergence nor divergence—and not to a convergent-divergent becoming; and I cannot understand anything which is not convergent.

Let us take an example in order to make this difficult problem clearer. A grain of wheat has been sown and it begins to germinate; a crow that comes across it swallows and digests it. I can understand what has happened if I regard the event from the level of the grain and from the level of the crow. The phenomena of the germination of the grain and of the nutrition of the crow obey laws which belong to the convergent-divergent determinism. I cannot, however, understand why this crow ate this grain at this moment, that is to say the meeting of the crow and the grain in space-time. In fact this meeting obeyed the statistical law which belongs to non-convergent-non-divergent determinism, that is to say to the permanence of the cosmos.

There exists in the cosmos, therefore, alongside convergent-divergent determinism, which explains the particular phenomena to me and permits me to predict them, another non-convergent-non-divergent determinism, which regulates the meetings of things without allowing me to explain them or

predict them. The play of this determinism, the level of the unpredictable particular phenomena, we call *chance*.

All that we have just said applies just as well to our mental microcosm as to the macrocosm. Here also there exist two determinisms. We only know as a rule the convergent-divergent determinism which makes and unmakes our associations. But it is another determinism, non-convergent-non-divergent, which presides over the elaboration of non-convergent language, a statistical determinism which regulates what we call chance. Freud was right to refute the idea of chance in associative functioning of the mind; but he did not see that chance can play a part in our intellect when we voluntarily detach ourselves from mental convergence. To the degree that my language is truly non-associative, the words appear in it according to the laws of statistics. I can thus explain their birth in general, but it is impossible for me to explain why such a word has appeared to me at such a moment.

It is known that cybernetics has built a binary language which uses only two signs, for example 1 and 0. If one were to take at random an irregular series of 1 and 0, this series could be later translated into a text. It is surprising to realize to what extent such a text resembles that which our mind produces when it speaks without associating. The same chance was at work in the two cases. It is obvious that the two texts are not identical, but they resemble each other by the fact that no affective tonality is tied up with them.

Non-convergent language expresses the non-will to experience; therefore it does not express any affective state, it is without colour; it has the pure white of the absence of the affective state. Each word in the text, taken separately, can awaken an affective resonance in the reader, but the totality of the text does not awaken any resonance, it has no moving nor emotive sense. It manifests the syntactical immutability of the One principle, an immutability which today is still unintelligible to us.

Non-convergent language is not living, is not structural upon the mode of living. It manifests and realizes my will to non-life (a will which we have seen is already incarnated in me, but not realized) in regard to my will to life already realized. It

represents the counter-work which aims at death-in-order-to-be reborn, this death and rebirth that all esoteric teachings tell us about.

Non-convergent language is the only real asceticism. It realizes non-attachment at the primordial level at which our already realized attachments lie, at the level of the elaboration of our subjective world. True non-attachment does not consist in separating oneself from one's possessions, but to possess as if one did not possess. It is not a question of our separating ourselves from our verbal power, but of possessing it as if we did not possess it, of bringing it into play in such a way that it brings us no affective affirmation.

Zen tells us: '*Awaken the mind without fixing it on anything*'. Thus it counsels us to practice *attention without object*, that attention which has an object as if it did not have it. As soon as one exercises oneself in this language one feels an attention which is quite new presiding over it; it is a constant vigilance not to be attentive in the way one normally is, not to seize, not to take, to let go again and again the hold which tends to re-establish itself.

It is a vigilance over nothing, over a void, over this true void which is not the absence of mental forms but the absence of convergent egocentric meanings, of mental forms which are nevertheless present.

CHAPTER 22

NON-CONVERGENT LANGUAGE
(continued)

The reader has perhaps noticed an apparent contradiction in our terminology on the subject of non-associative language; we have named this language first of all 'divergent', and then 'non-convergent'. Since two determinisms exist, the one convergent-divergent and the other non-convergent-non-divergent, and as we have seen that the second determinism presides over the appearance of words in non-associative language, it might seem to be contradictory to name this language sometimes 'divergent' and sometimes 'non-convergent'. We should like to explain this point because it will allow us at the same time to make more precise certain ideas which are important for our exposition.

The two determinisms, which are at work in the macrocosm and in our intellectual microcosm, do not act side by side in quality, but in a hierarchy constructed according to the law of three. We can represent this hierarchy by a triangle in the following way:

The convergent-divergent determinism is the *lower*; it forms, with its two aspects, the base of the triangle. It is dual, since it has two differentiated aspects. Its convergent aspect corresponds, in the universe, to the law of gravity (attraction of energy masses and convergent magnetic fields); its divergent aspect corresponds to the law of expansion of the universe (repulsion of energy masses; divergent magnetic fields). These two laws engender all the scientific laws regulating multiplicity.

The non-convergent-non-divergent determinism is *superior*; it forms the apex of the triangle. It is non-dual and is expressed by the single statistical law.

These notions that we have broached here by metaphysical intuition have recently been re-discovered by physics and mathematics. The superior determinism (single statistical law) has been re-discovered by Broglio in his *Mécanique Ondulatoire*,

and by Einstein in his 'single field' theory of the universe. It is known also that the study of light and electricity has come to postulate two theories, the one 'corpuscular' and the other 'wave motion'. The corpuscular theory corresponds to the lower dual determinism (dual according to whether the particles attract each other or repel each other, positive and negative electricity); the wave motion theory corresponds to the superior non-dual determinism. In spite of the hopes of certain thinkers, these two theories are irreducible since they correspond to two determinisms which are really distinct in the universe. Science shows us that the ideas of 'mass' and 'energy' are connected. That is not surprising since the two determinisms are tied together by the law of three; but these two notions will always remain distinct in our analytical, intellectual perspective; we cannot formally conceive their unity because it is none other than the single informal reality.

The single law of the superior determinism dominates and regulates the laws of the lower determinisms. This gives us a certain metaphysical explanation of the 'miracle'. If the single statistical law is understandable to us in its generality we cannot understand its activity in some particular phenomena. So the meeting of the crow and of the grain at some instant, or else the birth of some word in non-associative language, are properly speaking 'miraculous', incomprehensible and unpredictable. Man, to the degree that he has realized mental divergence and, at the same time, non-convergence-non-divergence, is able to bring to play, by the word which is entirely realized, the superior determinism and thus to influence the course of the laws of the lower determinism without having to understand, in an analytical way, how it is done.

When I create non-associative language, my direct effort is only effort towards divergence, an effort in order to favour divergence. In my usual language, there is already divergence; a verbal image disintegrates at the same time as another integrates; but then the divergence is subordinated to the associative convergence. I abandon one word for another only when there is a partial identity existing between the two. In non-associative language, on the contrary, I pass from one word to the next while being opposed to an associative transition; I make the

subordination of the divergence to the convergence stop; I thus favour divergence, my effort is an effort of divergence. But, to the degree that this effort achieves the equal action of the two aspects of the lower determinism, convergent and divergent, the superior determinism itself acts in such a way that the language elaborated in an effort of divergence is not, in fact, divergent, but non-convergent-non-divergent.

In all, when I write without associating, my work is a work of divergence belonging to the lower determinism, but I thus bring about in me the action of the superior determinism. Therefore this non-associative language can be called divergent in so far as I elaborate it and non-convergent-non-divergent in so far as it is elaborated in me.

Let us return, now, to non-convergent language and show in what way it differs from the language that 'surrealism' has proposed under the name of 'automatic language'. This designation, first of all, is inexact, since normal convergent language is already automatic; we have said enough about the automatisms of convergence and divergence. But we have more serious criticisms to make about surrealism. There is certainly, in the surrealistic language, a certain diminution of the usual convergence. However, the effort not to hear and understand the word which has come, in order not to associate, has not been defined. It is this effort which is essential. Above all, surrealism has committed the error of being interested in the text thus produced; it has sought there a kind of message which would carry a 'superior meaning'. The meaning of the text has been supposed superior to the meaning of an ordinary text, but of the same nature, since both would have the quality of being read; it was believed to mean something to the reader in a 'poetic' perspective, a perspective that is creative-integrating, and would therefore be comprehensible to the incompletely developed man. The surrealist effort towards divergence thus immediately falls back into the usual cult of convergence, a cult which, after all, it had never left.

This view of surrealism is valid for all the analogous attempts that modern art makes in various fields. After being disappointed by the artistic productions in which the cult of convergence ends up in a certain tiresome repetition, the artist had a really understandable reaction against the too meaningful aspects of works

of art. A sudden change was made in the direction of meaninglessness in order to avoid being smothered. But this reaction had an effective origin which was not purely intellectual; the cult of convergence-integration — a cult inhering to our affectivity — necessarily persisted. The exploration of meaninglessness was undertaken in the hope of discovering a renewed meaning. Instead of struggling towards meaninglessness in order to balance and revivify the creative mind of the artist (an effort during which the works produced would have no interest in themselves), the effort has continued to attach as much interest as ever to the works of art produced. This divergent reaction of modern art will certainly have happy consequences, but these consequences will only make themselves felt when the artist, after his divergent efforts whose visible results are without interest in themselves, comes back, renewed, revivified and refreshed, to the usual convergent efforts.

Non-convergent language, if it should not be called automatic, should not, either, be called absurd. There is absurdity in formal thinking when the latter expresses, at the same time, two contradictory meanings, two opposed convergences. 'This white horse is black' is, for example, an absurd sentence, but non-convergent language could not possibly contain opposed convergences; relatively it is non-sense (all the while keeping the absolute sense of syntax), but it is not absurd. There exists, at present, a certain philosophy of the absurd which comes, like modern art, from a reaction against the deceptions of meaningful thinking and which goes along a false road because of a lack of understanding.

This chapter will be concluded with the development of distinctions, until now only briefly indicated, between 'listening' and 'hearing'. When I think formally, my thinking is expressed in verbal images, but before this expression existed it was necessary that there should have been something to express. That is to say that my thinking pre-exists, in a certain way, its expression. It has been affirmed that we think intellectually only in words; in fact, the pre-existence of the thinking in relation to its expression is not a chronological pre-existence; I think and formulate my thinking simultaneously. But there is a genetic pre-existence of my thinking in relation to its expression; I

think and formulate my thinking at the same time, simul taneously, but informal thinking conditions the formulation. The unconscious is actualized in me in an informal way and it is this actualization which conditions the formulation.

What happens at the moment when my thinking is expressed? Let us look at this, first of all, from the point of view of usual convergent language. Everything happens as if my formal consciousness were a room in which I lived by identifying myself with this consciousness; and everything happens, also, as if this room communicated, through a trap-door, with a cellar in which are situated all the verbal potentialities that my memory makes use of. When I think in a convergent way, whatever it is that I want to say conditions the words I use to say it. When I have decided on a muscular movement, all the necessary operations for its execution are put into action by themselves; in the same way, when I have decided on a convergent thought, the necessary words for its expression are mobilized in the cellar and surge through the trap-door in the required order. This order brings with it two distinct aspects: it is, first of all, a logical, syntactical and universal order and it is also an individual order which presides over the rationalized meaning of language; it is a convergent order centred on the 'I-reality'.

These two orders, which obey the commands of the Self, correspond to two different aspects of this Self:

(1) The universal logical order corresponds to the universal Self, pure intellect, or the Buddhi of the Vedanta.

(2) The individual order corresponds to the individual Self, to my claim-to-be-absolutely-in-so-far-as-I-am-distinct, to the fundamental claim of my intellect brought into action by my 'will to live'.

These two aspects of the Self do not control language in the same way:

(1) The individual Self, which claims to be distinct in its identification with formal consciousness, controls the 'cellar' in a dualist attitude of opposition. It does not collaborate with it, but compels it to serve. Thus its control constitutes an intrusion. It is as though I went down into the cellar in order to *take* the words that I need.

(2) The universal Self acts as though it were not distinct from the cellar, since it does not pretend to distinction. Being non-distinct from the cellar, this Self does not control the cellar in a dualistic attitude. There is a collaboration between it and the cellar (this should not be understood as a local inertia, but as a dynamic system of the psyche). Therefore this collaborative control does not represent an intrusion. I do not go down into the cellar to *take* from there the syntactical structure of my language, I remain where I am in the room and I *receive* this structure which the cellar sends me. This structure represents a cosmic necessity which my formal consciousness and the cellar obey together.

When I elaborate non-convergent language, the universal Self acts as was described just now. But the individual Self acts otherwise; it acts without the claim which defines it, that is to say that *it acts by not acting*. When I spoke in the convergent way, I wanted a certain meaningful thought. This time I do not want any meaning and I am ready to receive the words which come to me.

My individual Self remains in the room, as does my universal Self. Therefore the words appear to me. In convergent language each word was preceded by my wish for this word; it did not surprise me when it came. On the contrary, in non-convergent language, the word comes to me without my wishing for it in particular; I do not wait for it; it surprises me. It is the same when, in a dream, I hear someone speak; although it is my own mind which carries on this conversation, the words surprise me to the degree that they are spoken.

In convergent language, I go down into the cellar, I take the words and I push them through the trap-door; they appear to me then 'from behind'. In non-convergent language, I wait for the word in the room and I see it arrive through the trap-door; I see it, then, from in front.

In the usual language, I speak, I wish for the word and I *hear* the word that I speak. In non-convergent language, I keep quiet and I *listen* to what is said in me.

In normal language, my attention is on speaking, not on hearing. I want to speak, not understand. In non-convergent language, my attention is on hearing and hearing thus becomes listening. But then I do not hear because, if I set out to hear, I

would fall again into the usual habit; my attention would come back again on to speaking and I would not listen any more.

As I am today, I am faced with a dilemma: either I hear passively, without being attentive to what I hear (usual language) or else I actively listen (non-convergent language) and then I do not hear (I do not understand the relative sense of my discourse, since it has none, and I do not understand the absolute meaning of the syntax either, because I lack complete development).

In neither case do I actively and consciously hear. I either perceive my language from behind (hearing without listening), or else from in front (listening without hearing). That is to say that I perceive my conscious world from one side or from the other, never in its totality, in its reality. It is as though I see the outer world through the right eye or through the left eye, but never through both of them at once; never do I have a stereoscopic vision (opening of the third eye).

The effort of non-convergent language does not claim to make us see, by itself, the mental reality or essence of the mind. It can only produce this vision for us one day when it has balanced entirely our present habit of mental convergence. In our usual intellectual functioning we are a spectacle without a spectator; in our divergent intellectual functioning we are a spectator without a spectacle. When the spectator without a spectacle is as completely developed as the spectacle without spectator, there will then be, at the same time and suddenly, the spectator and the spectacle.

CHAPTER 23

SPIRITUAL METHODS

All the studies which make up this book have been conceived from the point of view of pure Zen, of the Zen of Hui-neng and of Huang-Po.

Certainly no Zen Master has treated the problem of the condition of man and of his complete development in the way that we have done. It is evident that the differences of time and space influence the *way* of exposing a question, but the general sense of the exposition remains identical. If human intelligence has not varied since the epoch of Hui-neng, the techniques of its use have certainly changed. They have changed for the better and for the worse. Intellectual analysis has become more detailed, more searching, more expert; but at the same time the intellectuals are more easily led astray in a material which is too abundant. The complexity of the world of ideas has become such that we must today make immense efforts in order to re-discover the simple fundamental ideas.

The Zen Masters knew about the intellect as well as we do, but not in our way which has such an emphasis on the discursive. So we can understand that they did not formulate the distinction between the convergent and divergent functioning of the intellect. But they incessantly put their disciples on guard against the intellect (that is to say that they warned them against its partially convergent utilization); and their 'meaningless' and disconcerting replies are a clear indication in favour of the divergent use of language. The Koan is a non-convergent text given to the disciple for his contemplation; the Koan, adapted to contemplative natures, corresponds to the non-convergent writing that we are proposing, a writing which is adapted to our active occidental nature.

Thus we do not claim to discover anything in advising the use of non-convergent language. We only interpret, with great exactness, the teaching of the Zen Masters.

Our interpretation is summarized in this way: all our life at present—our thinking, feelings and actions—manifests the partial convergent functioning of our verbal intellect. This functioning comes from our will to experience which is a 'will to be' seeking its goal in the 'will to live'. In this condition, we have, more or less, the impression of being enslaved and imprisoned and we seek liberation and transcendence from our temporal limits.

The only way for us to have done with the impression of enslavement and to know absolute bliss consists in balancing the partial convergent functioning of our intellect by its partial divergent functioning. We must develop the intellectual automatisms of divergence as we have developed those of convergence.

As long as we have not understood this way to absolute harmony, the best thing we can do is to lead our present convergent life according to the greatest possible relative harmony. Our present life unfolds in the dualism of 'relative harmony - relative disharmony', 'positivity-negativity', 'affirmation-negation'. The positive pole of this dualism, however, can be much more apparent than the negative; it can even be the only one that is apparent. Many exemplary men, although they have not reached Satori, have obtained this relative harmonization of their dualistic life. We are going to show how this thing is possible and why some 'examples' can bring other men to great danger.

In a general way, the relative harmonization of a life which is only convergent consists in a construction of a world representation (or 'inner world') which is harmoniously convergent. The construction is made around an 'image centre' to which the organism of the subject 'resonates' in a very consonant fashion. This image must be able to play the role of directive idea, of general hypostasis, for the imaginative films which are incessantly renewed. It must be able to be the centre of all kinds of thoughts, feelings and actions which gravitate around it.

To say that this idea makes the organism of the subject resonate in a strongly consonant fashion is to say that the subject loves this idea deeply and in an authentic way and also that an identity of wavelength ties the image to the individual essence of the subject. By virtue of this identity, the image incarnates

the Beautiful-Good-True for the subject and the subject adores it. When an image centre is thus animated and the theoretical conceptions of the subject approve this love—in other words, when the love of the image is at the same time deep and well rationalized—this centre exercises a magnetic influence in the inner world which attracts around it a growing multitude of psychic elements. The image organizes around it, little by little, the inner world in a positive way, by a process of convergence or *concentration*. Each time the subject thinks, feels or acts in terms of the beloved image he accomplishes an act of concentration. This process of crystallization is accomplished more completely as the image centre becomes more vast and as it is able to tie more elements in this world together. Such ideas as 'serving one's country', or 'relieving human suffering', can be good centres for the relative harmonization of life because they are tied to a multitude of possible psychic elements. A divine image, loved with a mystic love, can be of an unlimited usefulness; all imaginable objects can represent it, since God is conceived as the reality of all things. In certain cases the idea of 'liberation' itself can serve as the harmonizing kernel.

When the image centre which presides over the convergent organization of the inner world is authentically loved by the subject, when the partiality for this image is sustained by a real preference embracing the individual essence, the efforts of concentration are released and accomplished spontaneously, by virtue simply of the desire to make these efforts. Even if they are made in a systematic way (regular exercises, meditations, prayers, contemplations), they are sustained by a true desire, by a real love. In this case the subject, by orientating his mind towards what he loves the most, radically distracts it from all the rest that he loves less. The centre of convergence is unique and the inner world is correctly harmonized around this unity.

Sometimes the beloved image is the idea of concentration itself (Raja Yoga). The subject really loves the image of his concentrated mind. Then any other supporting image can be used (a black spot at the centre of a piece of white paper; the feeling of a part of the body; the image of the lotus opening in the head). Behind the supporting image lies the image which is really loved and for this reason the exercises confer a relative harmonization.

But the results of voluntary mental concentration are quite different when the efforts are not sustained by the real love for the image centre. One often sees men give themselves up to 'spiritual' practices, not for the real love of an image centre, and independently of the harmonization which can result from this love, but in order to attain directly this harmonization itself. Often these men, through fear of failure, do not dare to struggle for the satisfaction of their authentic desires. They deny their individual essence in order not to see themselves afraid of failing to satisfy it; they are then ambitious for a 'spiritual realization' whose promise appeases their wounded pride. They meet, in books or in life, a man whose inner world is harmonized around an ideal image, and they dream of imitating him. They do not understand that their model is an individual case, they do not see that an authentic love for the image has presided over the concentration and has given it its efficacy; they think that the happy result has come from the efforts themselves; they persuade themselves, then, that they love such a spiritual image and exert themselves to the process of concentration.

Such practices are dangerous. In fact, the efforts of concentration are made, in a case like this, around an image which is not really preferred to all others. By concentrating on some promising theoretical exercises, these men struggle to distract themselves from what is, in terms of their essence, the true object of their desires. They thus create an illusory centre in their inner world, a centre which is contrary to the essential convergence of this world. They introduce into their psyche a conflict which tears them apart and the imbalance which results from it can be expressed by functional psychosomatic difficulties through neurosis.

All religions, all Yogas, resort to convergence, to concentration. Do not the very words 'Religion' and 'Yoga' signify to 'tie together'? The Yoga devotions and practices are situated, as is all our present life, in the domain of the will to experience even when the end envisaged is to experience that one no longer experiences anything. These methods can give very interesting results in the direction of a relative harmonization; they give them when the essence of the subject is found to resonate in a consonant way to the given images. The end result can be so

satisfying that, at first glance, it resembles Satori; the inner world of the subject can be made positive to a degree that dualism appears to be abolished from it; anguish has become quite improbable; death, or the loss of whatever might be, has ceased to inspire the least fear; 'supernatural powers' can be acquired, powers which are tied to inner decontraction and which bring in their wake a love which is happy and intense in its security (these powers are, in general, impressive to many of those who are witnesses of them and illusorily seem to them to be proofs of total realization). But this extreme positivity of the dualist world, achieved by progressive concentration around an adored image, apart from the fact that it is not given to all men, since it depends on an individual affinity, continues to reside in dualism.

Fundamental human anguish can be definitely masked; the inner situation of the subject can become extremely enviable; but this is not Satori. This well-established inner consonance remains relative; it is not the absolute consonance conciliating the relative consonances and dissonances equally present; it is not absolute bliss.

The convergent harmonization of the inner world can give us the 'saint' or the 'wise man', but not the man completely developed. It can give us extraordinary men, 'supermen', but not the 'normal man' at the same time ordinary and absolute. It can confer an apparent transcendence in which the man feels himself to be without Ego, not the real transcendence which is at the same time immanence in which the man feels himself an Ego and feels all things as his Ego. It can bring liberation from the impression of enslavement, but it cannot bring the absolute liberty with evidence that this liberty has always existed. It can bring to birth an inner attitude of detachment; but the subject remains attached in not being attached, in such a way that his condition has not been fundamentally changed.

Becoming completely developed supposes the use of efforts of intellectual non-convergence, efforts which alone are capable of balancing attachment and of neutralizing it at the very level at which it is born.

This counter-work is the same for all men, while inner work (convergent harmonization of the inner world) differs in each

case according to the man's modalities, since the consonant affinities of the particular essences depend on these modalities.

The various modalities of inner work are the many disciplines. The inner counter-work is the single divergent discipline which constitutes the antagonist-complement of all convergent disciplines. Mental divergence is antagonistic-complementary to all the modalities of convergence since it is antagonistic-complementary to mental convergence in general.

This parallel between spiritual methods and the use of non-convergent language does not mean that they are opposed. Inner work and inner counter-work collaborate in the complete development of man. If the particular essence of a given man brings him to use spiritual methods for the relative harmonization of his convergent mental world, this man should follow the indications of his nature. We intended only to define the following few points: the spiritual development is only one way among others of bringing about the first half of our complete development; all other relatively harmonizing ways can fulfil the same role. On the other hand, these methods of becoming a saint, or a wise man, like all the other mental, convergent enterprises, can in no way, by themselves, ensure the blossoming of the infinite possibilities of man.

CHAPTER 24

THE APPROACH OF SATORI

We have spoken, so far, of the realization of Satori from the single aspect of a progressive training in divergent writing. We do not believe for a moment that this training is the only way in which an intellect can acquire its divergent functioning. It is the easiest method, the one that is most compatible with a normal social life, but it is only a means, only a technique. The way of approach to Satori consists essentially in the divergent functioning of the intellect whatever might be the way in which this functioning is accomplished. The obtaining of Satori is an inner event which does not lie on the level at which proofs are possible. The man in whom this event is produced gains conscious access to the superior, non-convergent-non-divergent determinism where nothing is understandable in a discursive way, and where nothing therefore can be proved. This man knows that he has obtained Satori, but other men, still half developed, cannot have any indisputable certainty about it. The fact that the man of Satori gives himself out as such is not a proof; how are we to be certain that he is not mistaken, that he does not incorrectly interpret the possession of a simple relative harmonization?

We can be sure though, thanks to intellectual intuition, that Satori is possible. If we cannot confirm that some man has obtained his complete development, we cannot at the same time affirm that he has not obtained it. We are, then, sometimes bound to admit its probability.

The historical cases of Buddha and of Ramana Maharshi are two cases of probable Satori. We are going to say a few words to show that these two men, though they did not make use of divergent writing, did, nevertheless, develop the divergent functioning of their intellects.

In the case of Buddha we shall cite certain passages from a conference held at Oxford on June 14, 1953, by Dr D. T. Suzuki,

a conference which was entitled *The Buddha and Zen.* 'According to legend the Buddha was tormented at an early age by the problem of life and death . . . The need to escape from this cycle of birth and death preoccupied the Buddha so completely that he was not able to pursue his usual life for any length of time. He left his family and his palace and set off towards the forest at the foot of the Himalayas. First of all he made visits to the philosophers . . . But, although he had studied under the direction of the philosophers, the Buddha perceived at the end of several years that his problems were still not resolved and that he was still enclosed in the cycle of birth and death.

'He then directed himself towards moral discipline and ascetic practices. He reduced his physical needs to a minimum. According to tradition he only ate a few grains of sesame each day. At the end of several years he became so feeble and so thin that he could no longer stand up. Seeing himself in this state, he thought: 'If I die before having resolved the problem, I shall not have accomplished what I started. I must come back to the living, with good health and in full possession of my faculties.' He then started to take food again.

'Thus, neither intellectual discipline nor moral discipline had enabled him to resolve his problem. What was there left for him to do? He did not envisage any other way. But the problem persisted . . .

'Then he sat under the Bodhi tree and tried to find a solution. He did not know what to do. After having remained a week under this tree, so the Sutras say, his spirit was in extreme agitation. When he was studying philosophy, the intellectual pursuit of the problem had constituted a well-defined object; now this object no longer existed. When he had followed moral and ascetic discipline, there had been an object; this object no longer existed for him either. When he had become aware that the disciplines did nothing to resolve the problem, what was there remaining for him to do? There was nothing remaining. But the problem persisted and he was not able to be indifferent to it . . . He was unable to find the meaning of life and, without the meaning of life, why should he live? He was not able to die, either, because death would not have resolved the question . . . He was unable either to live or to die.

'During all this week the Buddha must have undergone a terrible test . . . When the torment came to its height, the Buddha lost consciousness of subject and object and sank into unconsciousness . . . But when such a state is attained it is by no means the end of the process. There must be an awakening and this awakening is generally provoked by an excitation of the senses. The Buddha was in this state when his gaze rested on the morning star. The rays of the star penetrated his eyes and reached his brain. He was awakened from unconsciousness and passed to the conscious state . . . What the Buddhists call illumination is this passage from unconsciousness to consciousness.'

The Buddha first of all places his confidence in intellectual convergence; he believes that philosophy — discursive comprehension—will be able to resolve his problem. He is obviously disappointed; intellectual convergence alone cannot be expected to ensure the complete development of man. He addresses himself next to moral and ascetic disciplines, a methodical training of the feelings and actions according to the intellectual partiality for an ideal life; and he is equally disappointed. In the course of these two attempts, he has organized, in the most harmonious way possible, his usual convergent life, his semi-developed inner world, his intellectual function which is simply convergent. But this relative harmonization is not sufficient for him; it remains within the dualism which he wants to leave; it does not resolve his problem.

Not knowing any longer what to do, the Buddha came back to the intellect; it is there that the problem is posed and there, as a consequence, it must be solved. Seated beneath the Bodhi tree he searches again for the solution through thinking. But he cannot make use of his thinking as he has done beforehand in a convergent way since this way of functioning is avowedly inefficacious. His intellect, however, still works in this way from habit; but this work is ceaselessly interrupted because of the evidence of its uselessness. Because of these interruptions, the convergent intellectual functioning is accomplished in zig-zags. He comes up against impasses, frees himself from them and meets again with new ones. These impasses are the multiple modalities of the single impasse which the intellect encounters when it has

only developed its automatisms of convergence and when it tries to fulfil itself by persevering in this direction. When we do divergent language, each association which is offered to us constitutes an analogous impasse from which we have to free ourselves.

The extreme agitation of the mind of the Buddha corresponded, therefore, to the last kicks of his convergent partiality at the end of the impasse. His usual convergent attitude has been decidedly confirmed as impotent; beneath the painful blows of this experience it begins to exhaust itself and to spread out, yielding its place, moment by moment to the antagonistic-complementary attitude of divergence. This attitude was imposed at last and the Buddha 'sank into unconsciousness'. The unconsciousness in question here is not that of profound sleep, of fainting, or of a coma; it is not situated this side of consciousness, but beyond it. It represents the functional state of the mind when intellectual convergence is balanced by divergence and when the 'meaningful' manifestations of the mind are neutralized at their very source. The two aspects—convergent and divergent—of the lower determinisms are conciliated in the superior non-convergent-non-divergent determinism; now this superior determinism regulates the intemporal permanence in which the memory, our usual consciousness, disappears; therefore the mind is then 'unconscious' beyond memory. In the same way, we are unconscious when we do divergent language, to the degree that our mind produces words without associating; we are surprised, when re-reading our text, to find there verbal ideas of which we have no memory; we then become aware that we have been unconscious of these ideas while our mind was forming them.

This very special consciousness resembles that of profound sleep, but it is really diametrically opposed. In relation to the hypnosis of our usual convergent consciousness, the state of profound sleep is this side while the unconscious state of the Buddha is beyond it. The hypnotic state of our usual thinking is an exclusive awakening to the mental image which is present; in deep sleep, our consciousness is asleep to all possible images; in the 'unconscious' state of the Buddha, consciousness is awakened in a way which is no longer exclusive or attached; it is awakened to all possible mental images; it is liberated from usual hypnosis;

but it still does not perceive any image in a non-exclusive way because the new intellectual function is not yet as developed as is the convergent function. The 'unconscious' state of the Buddha is not a state of inattentive sleep; it is a state of 'super wakefulness', of total vigilance, of attention to everything and nothing, of attention without object.

At the end of a certain length of time in this 'unconsciousness', intellectual divergence reached the point in the mind of the Buddha where it joined with the completely developed convergence. Then the state of 'unconsciousness' was itself surpassed. The mind perceived the image of the morning star in a way which was quite new, non-exclusive, not attached. He perceived it in its relation with the totality of possible mental images; that is to say that he perceived it as manifesting the essence of the mind to the same degree as any other image. In perceiving the star in this way, the mind of the Buddha was perceiving the essence of the mind itself; it was therefore perceiving its own essence; it was the perceived object at the same time as the perceiving object. The dualism was conciliated; the 'problem' was not resolved as the Buddha believed, beforehand, that it ought to be resolved; it had disappeared. Although no formal 'solution' had intervened, there was no longer any solution to seek because there was no longer any problem. In the Sermon on the Mount it is said: 'Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God'. The 'unconscious' state of the Buddha represent this purity in heart, the unity which is established when divergence balances convergence and when both are conciliated in the essence of the mind which is at last perceived.

The probable Satori of Ramana Maharshi was preceded by a sort of crisis which was brought on by the image of death, and during which this man 'realized' death. What exactly happened in the mind of Maharshi during this crisis obviously remains unknown to us; but it is no less obvious that this realization of death constitutes the very essence of the realization of mental divergence. Life is convergence, a partial wish for convergence or integration; our world representation in our usual will to live is based on the partially convergent utilization of the intellect. Maharshi, all the while continuing to live physiologically, realized in an intense and rapid fashion a mental will to die, that

is to say that he realized an accelerated development of mental divergence. He thus attained the complete development of his intellectual possibility and the disappearance of enslaving dualism.

We have gone to the trouble of citing these two historical cases in order to show that the approach of Satori consists essentially in the divergent functioning of the intellect. In these two cases the phases of intellectual divergence which preceded Satori were relatively short, yet they occurred in time. The utilization of divergent writing is a very much slower method; but fundamentally it is the same method. If it has the inconvenience of being slow, it has at least the advantage of being possible for us to apply (with the reservation of the exceptions we are going to explain in the next chapter). The examples of Buddha and Maharshi, on the contrary, are inimitable. What happened to these two men presupposes the coincidence of quite exceptional conditions: an intense need for the absolute, a wonderfully clear intellectual intuition which no relative harmonization can cloud, an indomitable vital force, a favourable surrounding intellectual climate, and so on. There are a certain number of men who are called to a complete development, who realize the necessary conditions, but who will never be able to imitate either the Buddha or Maharshi. These men can only develop the divergent functioning of their minds if this functioning is put within their reach; it is for them that we have proposed the modest method of divergent writing.

But yet again the inner counter-work is a single way, the same for all men. To exercise oneself in divergent writing is to do nothing other than what the Buddha and Maharshi did; it is only to do it less fast and in an accessible way. The pile of stones that a giant disperses in a few moments can be dispersed by the average man only by using a technique adapted to his capabilities.

CHAPTER 25

THE CONDITIONS REQUIRED FOR INNER COUNTER-WORK TO BE EFFECTIVE

We have seen that the complete development of man is the result of two processes, the one of mental convergence, the other of mental divergence; and we have seen that these two processes, far from being contradictory, mutually balance each other. We must now study the conditions which are necessary to achieve this balance.

In the chapter which closed the second part of this work, we discussed the various phases of human development: the phase of experimentation with life, the phase of understanding, and the phase of detachment. Experimentation and comprehension correspond to the inner work, to the first, convergent half of human realization. We shall call this first half 'convergent, or vital realization'. During this first period, man 'experiences' life and, using understanding, organizes his inner, convergent world, discovers his personal view of things, and establishes connections with the outer world which are convenient to him. The phase of detachment corresponds to the inner counter-work, to the second, divergent half of realization; we shall call this second half 'divergent realization'.

Divergent realization can only start after vital realization, but it does not interrupt the latter; it is superadded to it. The counter-work of divergent writing is superadded to normal life, alternating with it.

It is important to understand well how the efficacy of the inner counter-work depends upon the vital realization which precedes it. Divergent realization is only possible when vital realization is entirely and harmoniously established.

We must see that vital realization should be entirely established first. In fact, the effort of intellectual divergence consists in resistance to the normal play of associative or convergent automatisms. It would be impossible to learn to let go the 'hold'

on associations if this hold did not exist. The effort of mental decontraction presupposes the acquisition of the habit of contraction. It is necessary that a 'doing' should be developed in me in order that I might escape from it by means of a not-doing. Attention without object—that kind of attention which has an object as if it did not have it—is necessarily preceded by attention that grasps an object and is grasped by it. Detachment is resistance to an attachment whose existence it implies. I cannot die in order to be reborn if I have not first lived. The counter-work of mental divergence cannot possibly be undertaken before the age of adolescence, the age at which the convergent automatisms are acquired.

But this question of chronology is not the most important. Vital realization must not only be entirely established, it must be established harmoniously.

How are we to understand this harmony? Must my life be ordered in a perfect convergence for the counter-work to be undertaken fruitfully? This is not so. The harmony of convergent life is situated on the plane of phenomena; it can only be relative and apparent; it is not, then, a question of its being complete or perfect.

The vital harmony necessary to enable me to work on detachment consists only in a good adaptation to the outside world. It is necessary that I should become conscious of my individual essence and that I should have established compensations which suit my essence. This question of the adaptation of our essence to the outside world is very vast and very complex; we shall not say more about it here than we judge to be indispensable.

Every man who does not kill himself has 'compensations'; but this does not mean that he is necessarily adjusted, as his compensations can be of different qualities. We are going to describe, from this point of view, two opposed kinds of compensation which we shall call 'real' and 'illusory'. It will be a matter of describing the two extremes between which all the intermediaries can be observed.

An adjusted man, or one who is well compensated, has a 'real' compensation. The convergence of his inner world is realized around an image which does not represent himself and the perception of which produces in him a resonance which is positive

and authentic. This man *loves something other than himself*. Doubtless he loves this image-object by way of projection, by way of a transfer of his Ego; the 'I-reality', primarily identified with the organism of the subject, is transferred to a secondary identification. But, thanks to this transfer, an exchange is possible with the outside world. In the world-representation of this man, there exists an image which can be grasped and to which the granting of love confers a relative fixity and around which the other images can be arranged. An affirming interchange (of thoughts, feelings and actions) can be made with this image.

The man badly compensated, on the other hand, who is not adjusted, has an 'illusory' compensation. This man has suffered affective traumas, most often during the course of his infancy, at the moment at which the idea of his Self was forming. Some negations have been inflicted upon him which have engendered in him a doubt about his 'being'. The anxiousness that he experiences in face of the agonizing question, 'Am I or am I not?' impedes him from firmly establishing his identification with his organism and, as a consequence, from transferring this identification with his organism on to an exterior object. *This man, who has not come to love himself—for lack of feeling himself 'to be' with certainty—cannot yet love anything other than himself.* The image centre in this case, around which the inner world is going to try to arrange itself, is an image of himself succeeding at such and such a thing in life, an image of himself realizing such and such a relation with the outside world. This relation does, obviously, admit of an outer object in such a way that the subject *appears* to love something other than himself, but this object is only a means. The true object, towards which the subject is orientated, is an image of himself succeeding in something. This man does not love what he appears to love; he loves the image of himself attaining what he appears to love.

Often the outer object does not correspond with the essence of the subject; it has not been assumed in terms of a real positive resonance, but in terms of former humiliations which it is necessary for him to neutralize. Hamlet is haunted by the question: 'To be, or not to be'. He seems to want to revenge his father, but in reality he does not go towards this vengeance; he is attracted by the image of himself as revenger; he believes that this action

will rehabilitate him, will give him the certainty of his 'being', and it is this hypothetical redemption that he loves. The drama of Hamlet is not the drama of the love of justice, but that of self-love in connection with justice. The object around which the inner world of Hamlet tries to arrange itself—vengeance—does not correspond authentically with the essence of this man; Hamlet is not made for this type of activity at all; he has chosen this activity, not in terms of his essence, but because, to him, it seems capable of rehabilitating him and of raising him to the level of an admired father.

In an analogous way, a son who has felt himself inferior to his father, and because of this has conceived a doubt about his 'being', often embraces the career of his father, even if it is not suitable to his essence; he has too much need to become 'some-one' in his own eyes to take consciousness of his own individual tastes. He is persuaded that he will find his assurance when he has equalled and if possible surpassed, the man in comparison with whom he has denied himself.

One easily understands that a compensation might be illusory when the object does not correspond authentically with the essence of the subject. It is more difficult when the object is well adapted to this essence; it still comes to the same thing, however, if the subject is denied and in doubt of his 'being'. We have seen, just now, that the true object of this man is not the outer object implied in the compensation, but the image of himself succeeding in such and such an enterprise. We can now be more specific and say that the true object of this man is the image of himself *having succeeded* in some enterprise. Since it is a question of a success charged with rehabilitating the subject in his own eyes, it is obvious that the coveted end is the *instant* of success, while the necessary efforts which develop in the process of attaining this success do not procure, by themselves, any affirmation. The subject does not find himself compensated by what he does; he hopes to be compensated by what he *will have done* in the future; he does not live compensated; he lives non-compensated while awaiting an instantaneous compensation in the future. This inner situation often renders impotent the functions which are used. The future affirmation appears too distant; the subject is weary of making efforts during his enterprise; he is repelled by

making them, he is discouraged and becomes lazy. Sometimes, however, his endeavours bring some good, he succeeds. He feels himself, then, suddenly affirmed by grasping the image of himself as victor. But this object of his love, scarcely attained, is surpassed. As the hours and the days pass by the image grows old and blurred. The subject, for one moment reassured about his 'being' soon begins to doubt himself again. He has succeeded, but would he again be capable of doing so? From the moment when the object of the compensation is an image of himself posterior to the undertaking, this object of love is abstracted from time; all the compensation is abstracted from time, from the time in which life unfolds. Such a compensation, disjointed from life, is illusory.

We can assist ourselves by using a concrete example to make this difficult question clearer. Here, for instance, is a writer for whom literary creation is a 'real' compensation; this man does not doubt his 'being'; he does not write in order to prove that he 'is', but because he loves to write. He is certainly not indifferent to the possibility of being one day a brilliant writer, but most often he does not think about this at all; it is not this that he loves, but the fact of writing. His efforts interest him in themselves. He feels at ease when he works and his life has a direction for him during all the time that he devotes to it. Feeling himself affirmed in time, this man is patient; he does not wonder whether what he creates is a future masterpiece; he is not constrained to find—for this question which he does not pose to himself—an affirmative answer.

Here, on the other hand, is a man who also has the gift of writing, but who, doubting his 'being', uses this gift in the hope of becoming a great writer and of thus curing this cruel doubt. This man could have the ability, like the other one, to love writing, but all his love is devoted to a future image of himself as a great writer. Fixed on this point, abstracted from time, his love is unavailable for all the rest; he does not like the work which separates him from his goal. Compared with the masterpiece for which he yearns, all that leaves his pen seems to him insufficient or even detestable. He is in a hurry to finish with this arid period which is deprived of affirmation. He has no patience at all. He could become capable of producing nothing; he could

hate, at last, his sterile brain and all literary activity. Or perhaps he might reach the end of a book, a book which is, in general, mediocre, because no fervent concentration presided over its production. The author is, however, delighted to have produced something, to be at last a 'writer'; he rejoices in the compliments that people may offer him and, as a result, enjoys a respite. But he soon ceases to see himself as author of this book; he sees himself as the man who 'earlier wrote this book'; he is no longer this man and wonders if he could produce again; his doubt torments him once more.

In the case of illusory compensation, the inner state of the subject is unstable, full of contrasts, of intoxicated joys alternating with depression; the maladjusted subject sometimes sees himself as a genius, sometimes as a nonentity. In the case of real compensations, on the contrary, the state of the subject is stable; his joys do not present exultant heights, but they are continuous. The subject is interested in what he does, not in the image of himself after the achievement of this or that; he has no opinion about himself, he does not seek to know if he is better or worse than others.

The inner world could be regarded as a multitude of iron filings whose normal movement consists in regularly gravitating around a centre. In a man well compensated, this gravitation is realized. This man resonates, with complete consonance, with a certain aspect of the outer world which gives him the feeling of the divine; he sees this object as absolutely real and the corresponding image is the centre of gravity of his inner world. No doubt he loves other things, but with a relative love, subordinated to his essential adoring love.

In the man badly compensated, afflicted by doubt about his 'being', the conscious image centre is an image of himself succeeding in such and such a thing, the image of some success that he has laid claim to. But this image does no more than represent another image, the image of himself delivered from doubt of his 'being'; this latter image is implicit, unknown by the subject, 'subconscious'; but it constitutes, nevertheless, a magnetic centre which co-exists, in the inner world, with the image of the success claimed. The magnetism of this second centre exerts itself in opposition to the first. In fact, the yearning to attain the image

of himself delivered from doubt brings with it the timid refusal to push himself into a real undertaking which can always fail and, as a consequence, make more distant the certainty of 'being'. Thus there exists a rivalry, a division, in the inner world of this man. From this comes a total suffering, more or less lacerating; each one of the filings is torn between the two opposing attractions.

Sometimes, however, this man obtains a success which reassures him, momentarily, about his 'being'. Then the image of himself delivered from all doubt is attained and the obstructing magnetic attraction that this centre exerted is diminished or disappears (because the strength of the attraction exerted by an image is only as great as the distance of the image from realization). At this instant, the inner world of the subject encloses, at last, an active centre that is single; the filings are relieved of the previous division and this is expressed by a joy as exultant as the previous state was unhappy. The subject feels himself to have been made positive and all of life appears marvellous to him.

At other times there is no success, there are even failures, and the subject strongly doubts his 'being'. Then the image of himself delivered from doubt becomes distant and his magnetism is regenerated. The inner world is again torn between its two centres. The subject feels himself made negative and the whole of life appears horrible to him.

An evolved man, ready for the complete development of human possibilities, is always more or less inhabited by the terrible doubt about his being, because the need for the absolute appears early, at an age when the child is very vulnerable to the negations which can reach him. Thus the majority of these men fall, more or less, into illusory compensations from which no success can deliver them. Only an understanding of what has happened in them can allow them to establish their real compensations.

The state illusorily compensated does not bring with it any harmony of the inner convergent world. This world is truly convergent; the automatisms of convergence are acquired, but the functioning of these automatisms is spasmodic, contracted. In these conditions, the inner counter-work cannot be performed

successfully. In fact, the man badly compensated is incessantly anxious and frustrated. He is not simply attached to an object possessed in time; he struggles to attach himself to an object which escapes him and this attachment does not allow detachment to be installed next to it. This man, who suffers from not being able to establish his attachment, cannot sincerely wish to work to detach himself. He lives persuaded that his total accomplishment is possible in the direction of 'life'. He cannot understand, in the very depths of his being, that life alone will never be able to quench his thirst for the absolute.

The essential condition for inner counter-work to be undertaken successfully is the certain and living understanding of its necessity. Only the man really compensated can have this understanding. This man has attained to the attachment of himself to something other than an image of himself. He has enjoyed an interchange with the outer world which has contented his essence and he has accomplished, as well as possible, his will to experience.

Furthermore, he has correctly experienced; that is to say that he has ascertained, with his animal organism and with his intellect, that all vital satisfactions are insufficient. He has succeeded in his vital realization and has experienced the *failure of success*. In entering into life, he believed that the accomplishment of his distinct being would be his total and ultimate accomplishment; it is an absolute success that he aims at, through all the relative successes. Through succeeding in his relative life, he becomes aware that absolute success escapes him, that his impression of lacking something was only compensated by his life and persisted beneath his compensation.

One could object that a man would not be able to manage to try all the satisfactions of which his essence is capable. This objection would be valid if proof of the insufficiency of the vital satisfactions depended only on the particular animal organism. But the general intellect participates in the experience of life; thanks to the intellect, I can understand, in face of my major experiences, the insufficient nature of all my possible vital satisfactions.

When a man has really managed to compensate himself and at the same time to understand, with proof, that the most

wonderful and stable joys are powerless to give him his total realization, then he is ready to understand the necessity of divergent realization and to apply himself fruitfully to it.

Here is an example to show how understanding conditions the efficacy of inner counter-work. A man is fervently attached to a woman who refuses him. He is attached to her in an unhappy, destructive way, and all his possibilities in other directions are inhibited. He wishes for his release. He goes away from the woman, in the hope that this separation will free him. If this man has not truly understood the profound mechanisms of his attachment, if he remains persuaded that the possession of this woman would be his supreme accomplishment and would resolve the problem of his human condition, the separation could only procure for him an apparent diminution of his attachment. His slavery will start up again more strongly when he sees the woman again; or else he will become the slave of another woman, as he was of the first. If, on the contrary, this man has fully understood that the success of his love would be, in any case, incapable of giving him what he had wished to attain by this means, then the separation will bring detachment to him. This detachment would be the effect of two connected factors: understanding and separation. The inner counter-work is a sort of separation from the convergent world to which we are attached; if I do this work without having fully understood the insufficient character of the most harmonious vital realization, I cannot get good results from it. It is not sufficient that I should give up the life to which I am attached; this giving up is necessary, but not sufficient. Yet no more is it sufficient that I should understand without giving up. It is necessary that I should understand and it is necessary also that I should give up.

Let us conclude by saying that the requisite conditions for the efficacy of divergent writings are these: a life really compensated; the understanding that this life will never, by itself, be more than a half realization, a semi-development of our human possibilities; and finally a patient perseverance applied to the exercise of divergent writing. The third condition is easily fulfilled when the first two are fulfilled; but the fulfilment of the first two conditions presents very great difficulties.

These ideas being well established, we can now discuss the

question of the 'master' or the 'guide' during the total realization of the man. It is frequently said that man cannot obtain his realization without the personal help of a master. This opinion, like all opinions, is both true and false.

For divergent realization — or the second half of the total realization—no master is necessary. In this inner counter-work, it is impossible to go astray; such is the impasse into which it leads us. A guide is only necessary when we set out to arrive somewhere. I have need of a master to learn some movements that I wish to make with my limbs, but I have no need to learn how to decontract my muscles. I have need of a professor of philosophy, or of poetry, in order to learn how to think in the truest or most beautiful way; I have no need of such a person if I wish to learn not to think.

We should say, in relation to this, that divergent writing can do no harm to anyone who does it. This exercise can be fruitless if the conditions for its efficacy are not realized, but it can do no injury of any sort to anyone.

For convergent realization, on the contrary, which precedes and conditions divergent realization, a master is almost always necessary and this is so from several points of view.

To acquire the general understanding of human realization a teaching is necessary. If the subject is very gifted intellectually —gifted with intuition and rigorous logic—a written teaching can be sufficient. But exchange of ideas is generally necessary to resolve the particular difficulties of understanding and a personal tutor must then be used.

But it is for the relative harmonization of convergent life that the company of a master is, above all, indispensable. Each of us sees our own life badly. It is very difficult to reveal to oneself the illusory character of one's compensations and it is impossible to remedy alone the doubt about our own being. The deliverance from this doubt necessitates interchange with an outer and impartial intelligence which does not judge us, but which takes our thinking into account and thus rehabilitates us, little by little, in our own eyes. Sometimes, also, the subject has a real 'spiritual' essence and he needs a master—and all the ideas which this master represents—as an object of love for his real compensation.

But we must insist, at the end of this work, on the fact that the second half of the realization, that which is additional to our life and accomplishes our development, does not bring with it either love or experience. It does not reside on the place of life, on the place of experience. All that can be called 'liberating experience' only represents a relative liberation by the relative harmonization of the inner convergent world. The second half of the realization escapes from all formal perception and, by consequence, from all description. The real work of detachment does not consist in detaching ourselves from all except one thing, this one thing being the idea of detachment; it consists in detaching ourselves from *all*, in detaching ourselves at the very source of our attachment. It is not a question of our letting such and such a thing go; it is a question of 'letting go'.

GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD

London: 40 Museum Street, W.C.1

Auckland: 24 Wyndham Street
Bombay: 15 Graham Road, Ballard Estate, Bombay 1
Buenos Aires: Escritorio 454-459, Florida 165
Calcutta: 17 Chittaranjan Avenue, Calcutta 13
Cape Town: 109 Long Street
Hong Kong: F1/12 Mirador Mansions, Kowloon
Ibadan: P.O. Box 62
Karachi: Karachi Chambers, McLeod Road
Madras: Mohan Mansions, 38c Mount Road, Madras 6
Mexico: Villalongin 32-10, Piso, Mexico 5, D.F.
Nairobi: P.O. Box 12446
New Delhi: 13-14 Asaf Ali Road, New Delhi 1
São Paulo: Avenida 9 De Julho 1138-Ap. 51
Singapore: 36c Prinsep Street, Singapore 7
Sydney, N.S.W.: Bradbury House, 55 York Street
Toronto: 91 Wellington Street West

ZEN, ROCKS, AND WATERS

FREDERIC SPIEGELBERG

With an Introduction by SIR HERBERT READ

'Zen Buddhism of all religions is the one that most specifically educates the aesthetic impulse, and for that reason alone it is a religion that engages the interest of artists everywhere,' says Sir Herbert Read in this handsome volume.

Philosopher, explorer, author and teacher, Dr Spiegelberg combines the contagious intensity of his feeling for his subject matter with an attendant understanding of its history. His lucid text traces the Zen spirit from its beginnings in the commingling of Buddhism and Taoism in China between twelve and fourteen hundred years ago, and uses it as a key to the understanding of pictures which not only represent nature but point to the Tao.

Man, in his search for ultimate Reality, is led by Zen to 'the path of the razor's edge', where the Meaning of all meanings, the Essence of all essences, is revealed in ordinary everyday existence, the Here and Now; where the world of eternity is to be found in the world of time. Thus, the Zen painter shunned the grandiose and used his disciplined brush to depict a rock, the rippling surface of water, rain slanting down on a lonely cottage, each in its own 'suchness'.

Many of the sixteen prints that illustrate this book have been taken from *The Mustard-Seed Garden*, and each is accompanied by an illuminating commentary by Dr Spiegelberg, who is professor in the Department of Asiatic Studies at Stanford University.

Crown 4to. 20s net

BUDDHIST MEDITATION

EDWARD CONZE

As an intensely practical religion, Buddhism has throughout its long history concentrated on devising a great number of meditations which serve to promote the spiritual development of its followers, and aim at opening their eyes to the true facts of existence. Meditational practices constitute the very core of the Buddhist approach to life, which by contrast is inclined to treat doctrinal definitions and historical facts with some degree of unconcern. In recent years psychologists have shown great interest in the therapeutical value of these meditations, but accurate information about them has been hard to come by. The most outstanding original documents have now been made accessible by Dr Conze, who has translated them direct from the Pali, Sanskrit and Tibetan.

Crown 8vo. 12s 6d net